

Amateur



2017's best gear
EISA's pick of the **top cameras**
and **lenses** of the year so far...

Photographer

Passionate about photography since 1884

Get perfect colour

How to make sure
that **what you see**
is **what you print**

**Can't afford it?
Rent it!**

Why **hiring** can be
better than **buying**

**'I've made £3k
renting out my
camera gear'**

Make money from your
kit when not using it

**Trying a
new genre**

Why a **landscape
shooter** switched
to **street**

Nikon D5600 Full test of compact APS-C SLR with quality touchscreen



18
MM

400
MM



ONE LENS, NO LIMITS

18-400 mm F/3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD

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ZOOM RANGE

The new Megazoom lens from Tamron provides unlimited photographic possibilities for most situations, you can shoot everything from landscapes to portraits, sports and wildlife with one lens.

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5

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In this issue

14 You're hired

It's a great way to try out kit without breaking your budget – just rent some high-end gear for some quality shooting time

22 A world of colour

Are you needing some help with colour management? Three pros guide you through this integral part of any photographer's workflow

26 Street spirit

Landscape photographer Dave Fieldhouse set himself a challenge to shoot a different genre. His results portray the benefits of stepping out of your comfort zone once in a while

30 Information is beautiful

Incredible images of Google's vast data centres as seen through the lens of Connie Zhou. She also explains the challenges of such a shoot

34 EISA Awards – Europe's best products

The results are in; find out which cameras, lenses and accessories were successful in the 2017-18 EISA awards

45 Nikon D5600

Audley Jarvis casts his expert eye over Nikon's latest intermediate-level DSLR – a replacement for its D5500

Regulars

3 7 days

10 Inbox

48 Accessories

49 Tech Support

66 Final Analysis



In 1982 the Editor of AP, Roy Green, had an idea for an organisation where the editors of Europe's leading photo magazines could get together and pick their collective favourite cameras and accessories. A kind of photographic EU, if you will. That organisation, EISA, has now grown to incorporate the worlds of hi-fi, mobile, TV and other areas of tech. This year it expanded

7days

A week in photography

its borders to include Australia and the US. AP is still an active member of the photo panel, along with 15 other members, and next week we'll be in Berlin for EISA's annual awards ceremony, attended by senior representatives from all the major camera and tech brands. Turn to page 34 to discover which of this year's cameras, lenses and accessories were deemed the best by Europe's most respected editors.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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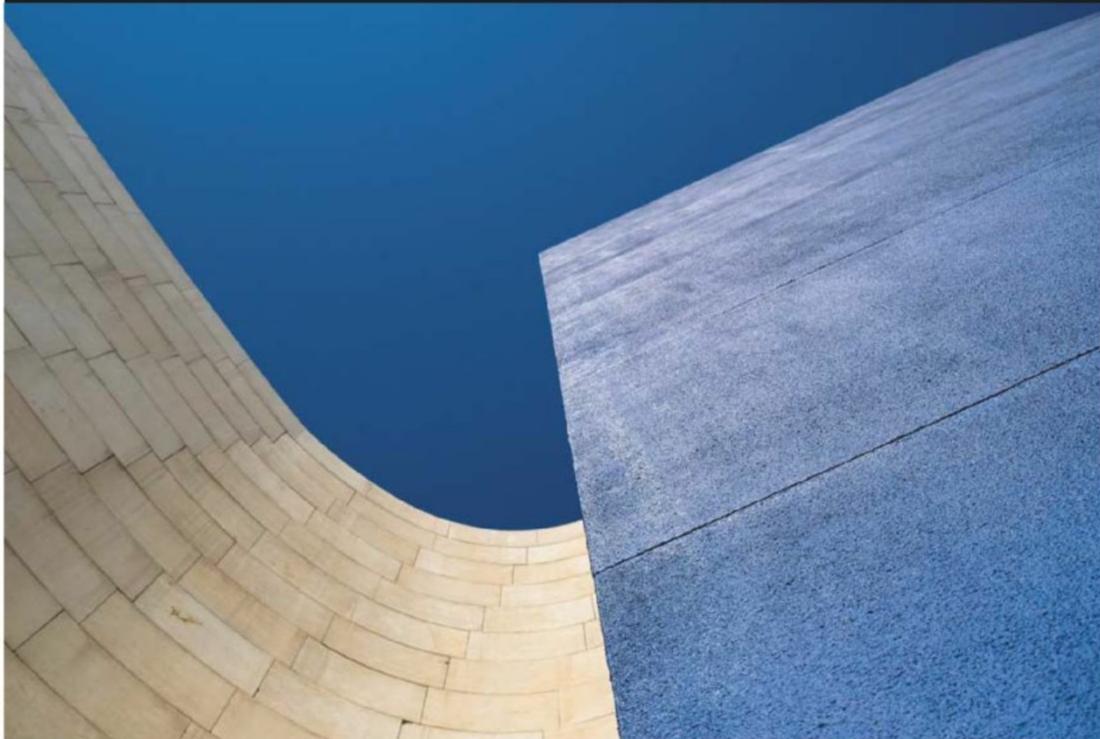


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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



© TIM GREENE

Guggenheim Museum by Tim Greene

Fujifilm X-T2, 18-55mm, 1/2,000sec at f/8, ISO 400

This image by Tim Greene was uploaded to our Flickr page.

'This colourful abstract photograph is an untypical view of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, which I visited with my wife for a significant birthday this year,' says Tim. 'Most images of the museum show its iconic shiny,

metal-clad exterior but I wanted to capture something different. I love to photograph bold, graphic, simple, abstract shapes, so the contrast in colour, lines and textures in this image really stood out to me. I decided on this unusual composition to tie all of the graphic elements together.'

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If you'd like to see your work published in *Amateur Photographer*, here's how to send us your images:

Email Email a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to appicturedesk@timeinc.com.

CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 51.

Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints Well-packed prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 51.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Liam Clifford and Hollie Latham Hucke

New speedlites from Yongnuo

Hong Kong-based camera company

Yongnuo has launched its first speedlite powered with a Li-ion battery, the YN686EX-RT, compatible with Canon's RT system. It features a 2.4GHz transceiver and a 2,000mAh battery able to power 750 full-power flashes, and works as both master and slave. The flashes are available from eBay and Amazon.



Canon SELPHY CP 1300

Canon has announced the launch of a new ultra-compact printer, which is smartphone compatible using Wi-Fi. The SELPHY CP 1300 can print up to 256 shades of each colour, for true-to-photo results. The SELPHY CP 1300 will be available from September in black, white and pink at £129.99.

Cascable 3.0 released

A new version of the Cascable remote-control app for iOS devices has been launched. It supports more than 100 cameras from Canon, Fujifilm, Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic and Sony. New features for the 3.0 version include a powerful set of geotagging tools and enhanced performance. The base app is free from the App Store.



Just ask Alexa for your shots

Amazon has added Alexa, its impressive voice-controlled AI assistant, to Prime Photos for Fire TV. Users of the popular service will be able to request their television to 'show my photos' to bring up the app, and ask for specific albums to be displayed, all without touching the remote control.



US Army drops DJI drones

A leaked memo has revealed that the Armed Services in the US are dropping all DJI products and applications of use, due to cyber vulnerabilities that could lead to operational risks. The memo does not go into further specifics of the weaknesses. DJI has responded, saying that it is 'surprised and disappointed' that it was not consulted.



GET UP & GO

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



Landscape workshop

The landscape gardens of Stowe are regarded amongst the most influential gardens in Europe. It's easily one of the most remarkable creations of Georgian England. Landscape guru Charlie Waite will lead this one-day workshop and guide you through a variety of techniques.

21 September, www.lightandland.co.uk

BELFAST



DSLR introduction

In this workshop from Belfast Exposed, you will get an introduction to your camera's manual controls and will get to know its potential. This course of four sessions will also enable you to apply a practical and theoretical knowledge to help you use a digital camera effectively and creatively.

6 September, www.belfastexposed.org

BIG picture

A peek at the shortlist for Insight Astronomy Photographer of the Year

 It used to be that astronomy photography was the preserve of those who were able to afford high-end telescopes, cameras and lenses. However, as equipment becomes more affordable and camera quality increases, now anyone can take a peek into the heavens. The Insight Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition has, year after year, been host to a number of awe-inspiring images, such as this one by Ruslan Merzlyakov.

The competition, run by the Royal Observatory Greenwich in association with Insight Investment and *BBC Sky at Night Magazine*, is in its ninth year. It is clear that the lines between amateur and professional blur as the genre becomes more accessible. The winners will be announced on 14 September, with an exhibition at the Royal Observatory opening on 16 September.

Words & numbers

Most things in life are a moment of pleasure and a lifetime of embarrassment; photography is a moment of embarrassment and a lifetime of pleasure

Tony Benn, politician
1925-2014



The most interesting things to see, to do and to shoot this week. By Oliver Atwell



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Photoshop Essentials
A one-day workshop for photographers who would like to use Photoshop to develop their creative skills in photography, but are not sufficiently familiar with the range of tools and techniques available. You will need to bring your own laptop with a version of Photoshop installed.

14 September, www.rps.org/events



DERRY

Archive of Modern Conflict
Opening at the Void art gallery in Derry before embarking on a national tour, Collected Shadows offers a rare glimpse of the extraordinary collection of photographic images in the Archive of Modern Conflict, a collection that spans more than 150 years.

Until 7 October, www.derryvoid.com



LONDON

Architectural Heritage of Yemen

This exhibition at London's Brunei Gallery and the accompanying events will explore the astonishing variety of building styles and traditions that have evolved over millennia in a region of diverse terrains, extreme climates and distinctive local histories.

Until 23 September, www.soas.ac.uk

40,383

Number of Polaroid photos in the world's largest instant photo gallery

SOURCE: GINNIES



Terje Abusdal impressed the judges to win €25,000

Leica Oskar Barnack Award 2017 winners

A NORWEGIAN photographer has taken the top spot in this year's Leica Oskar Barnack Award with his long-term project entitled 'Slash & Burn'.

Terje Abusdal impressed the judges with his expressive shots of the Forest Finns, a recognised ethnic group in Norway that has a deep connection to nature. Originally started as his thesis project during his time at the Danish School of Journalism, Abusdal's project functions as both a record of the Forest Finn people and

as a study in how to capture the immaterial in photography. In his attempt to try to capture the ephemeral aspects of their culture, he started to blend reality and fiction, mixing into his shots the fire, smoke and Shamanism of the group's history in what he calls 'a deliberate attempt to create a fictional universe, a magical world'.

As grand prize winner, Abusdal will receive €25,000, a Leica M-series camera and accompanying lens.

Also celebrated at the awards was

Newcomer Award-winner Sergey Melnichenko of Ukraine, for his portrait series 'Behind the Scenes', capturing in detail the off-stage lives of dancers in a club in China. The judges were impressed with the sensitivity in the 25-year-old's work, despite the occasionally harsh subject matter he was dealing with.

As the Newcomer Award winner, Melnichenko will also receive a Leica M camera and lens, as well as €10,000 in prize money.

Karin Rehn-Kaufmann, art director and chief representative of Leica Galleries, writes: 'I would like to congratulate Terje Abusdal and Sergey Melnichenko, the winners of this year's Leica Oskar Barnack Award, on behalf of the whole jury. Both photographers have impressively shown that they have a truly special eye for seeing and portraying the interaction of people with their environment. They have won through against around 2,700 competitors from 104 countries and have convinced all members of the jury with their impressive portfolios.'

The Leica Oskar Barnack Award is one of the longest-established and most prestigious international photographic competitions – this year marks its 37th edition.



Twenty-five-year-old Sergey Melnichenko of Ukraine won the Newcomer Award



The 30mm f/1.4 DC HSM Art has been affected by a bug

Sigma warns of bugs

 SIGMA has released a warning to its users of an error that may occur when matching several of its lenses with Canon DSLRs, including the EOS 77D and EOS 6D Mark II.

Sigma writes: 'When certain lenses are attached to these cameras and the "Lens aberration correction" function on these cameras is set to "Enable" for Live View shooting, an error would occur.'

So far, lenses confirmed to be affected are the 30mm and 35mm f/1.4 DC HSM Art lenses, and 30mm, 50mm and 85mm f/1.4 EX DG HSM lenses. Users are advised to keep the lens aberration function disabled until a fix is available. Visit www.sigmaphoto.com for more.



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GoPro has seen a turnaround in its fortunes following a company-wide restructure

GoPro in recovery ahead of Hero 6 launch

ACTION camera giant GoPro appears to be back on the road to recovery after a year of huge losses in 2016 prompted a large-scale restructuring plan that saw more than 250 full-time employees laid off and a significant (39%) reduction in its inventory levels.

In its second-quarter report, the company reveals it has increased revenue by 34% year-on-year – taking in \$297 million in the last three months or so. There's also been a very strong increase in its international sales, with more than half

of the company's revenue coming in from non-US sources for the first time. Some territories saw impressive increases – revenue from the Japanese market, for example, jumped 164%.

The report also reveals that, despite a slightly shaky start, the Hero 5 Action Camera was the company's biggest-selling camera, and the GoPro Karma drone – infamous for a fatal hardware bug that caused them to literally fall out of the sky when they were first released – was the second-most desired

unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) in this quarter.

While GoPro is still operating at a loss and the company remains a far cry from its financial domination of a few years ago, this appears to be a huge step towards recovery – and investors appear to agree, with stock prices for the company seeing a 20% increase within a day of the report's release.

Later this year, GoPro will be officially releasing the Hero 6, the latest entry in its tough action-camera lines, and the Fusion, the company's first 360 video camera.

PaintShop Pro 2018 launches

Corel has revealed the latest version of its PaintShop Pro image-editing software. PaintShop Pro 2018 features performance and speed enhancements, as well as a redesigned and customisable user interface that all mean it now operates better with high-resolution displays and pen and touch devices.

There's also the more expensive 'Ultimate' package, with access to Aftershot 3, Corel's answer to Adobe's Creative Cloud photography subscription for a single payment.

PaintShop Pro 2018 and PaintShop Pro 2018 Ultimate are available now. The basic package is £69.99 and the 'Ultimate' package costs £89.99. A free trial is available at www.paintshoppro.com.

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk



The latest version of PaintShop Pro is on sale

New Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography. By Oliver Atwell



© STEVE MCCURRY/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Afghanistan

by Steve McCurry, Taschen, £59.99, 256 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-3-8365-6936-1



AFGHANISTAN has been endlessly defined by its tumultuous history and relationship to the West. When you think of the country, it's difficult not to conjure images of conflict. But that is, of course, nothing more than a caricature of a land that in reality is as beautiful and diverse as anywhere else. In this volume by Taschen, the publisher has collected together a wide selection of images by travel photography legend Steve McCurry. There's an argument to be made that McCurry's images are another form of caricature. His work concerning other nations is often accused of being picture-postcard perfect. That's perhaps to miss the point. McCurry's work is subjective and very much about his attraction to colour, light and people. He's not necessarily trying to give an accurate portrait of a nation. It's more that he looks for the beauty in everyday scenes. This book is no different, and while it would be easy to level the previous accusations at this book, it's undeniably beautiful and a real masterclass in travel photography. ★★★★

Stoppers: Photographs from my life at Vogue

by Phyllis Posnick, Abrams Books, £45, 256 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-1419722448



PHYLLIS Posnick may not be a name you're familiar with, but, as *Vogue*'s executive fashion editor, she has created some of the most bold and challenging photo editorials ever to grace the magazine's pages.

Posnick's concepts stand out due to their bold creativity and utterly surreal tableaux. This extraordinary book features a number of notable and legendary photographers including Irving Penn, Mario Testino, Anton Corbijn and Annie Liebovitz. Under the guidance of Posnick, each of these photographers, accomplished as they already are, succeed in creating images that are mesmerising, beautiful and linger in the memory long after you've put down the book. ★★★★



Viewpoint David Healey

The return of Kodak's Ektachrome this autumn reminds us that colour needs careful managing, whether on film or in digital

Ever calibrated your monitor? Recording and rendering colour accurately is no new challenge. Hot on the heels of the new Rollei-badged slide film, called Vario Chrome, Kodak is also to reintroduce its highly regarded Ektachrome colour positive film this autumn.

John Bulmer, a photographer whose images illustrated many a Sunday supplement from the 1960s onwards, relied on an earlier Ektachrome reversal film called Ektachrome X. This was an amateur emulsion designed to tolerate the varied conditions in which people store film, and which tended to have a slight green colour cast. To obtain a more neutral colour balance, he bought the film in batches, put it in the airing cupboard to 'mature' it, and tested a film from the batch periodically to see if it gave the results he wanted. When the colour was as he wanted, he moved the entire batch from the airing cupboard to the freezer to minimise further colour shifts. Serious digital photographers will be similarly familiar with managing colour by calibration.

The art of managing colour

Students often ask me if they can print colour in the school darkroom. My answer is always 'no' because, first, monochrome is arguably a better medium with which to

teach, and second, because achieving colour accuracy demands precision beyond our scope. Kodak's new Ektachrome film will undoubtedly be manufactured to its legendary high standards but as with any colour film, or the files your camera outputs, what colour the subject is rendered in will be affected by many factors including how the viewer sees and recollects colour. One advantage of darkroom colour processing is you can often put the final print next to the object you photographed and check the colour.

Today's film photographers are occasionally described as 'nostalgic'. Yet people rarely maintain a 'sentimental longing or wistful affection for a period in the past' when it involves hard work! The disciplines of managing colour and exposure when using film (especially transparency film, when there is minimal potential for post-processing correction, meaning it has to be right before you press the shutter) can teach us a great deal. Film is as old as the art yet relevant to our age. Colour has not changed and still needs managing. Roll on the new slide films.

David Healey ARPS tutors photography at King Edward VI Aston School, and is chairman of the RPS's Analogue Group. To enjoy John Bulmer's work see www.johnbulmer.co.uk, and for more on colour management turn to page 22 of this issue.



Positive (also known as reversal, slide or transparency) film requires a light box, slide viewer and ideally a projector to view, ideally in complete darkness

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 51 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

In next week's issue

On sale Tuesday 29 August



Hooked on classics

Tips on making the most of classic pieces of kit - from manual-focus lenses to lens mount adapters



APOY Round Six

APOY moves on apace; it's now your chance to explore the abstract world

Second-hand camera guide

A comprehensive look at the classic film camera market – bag a bargain now

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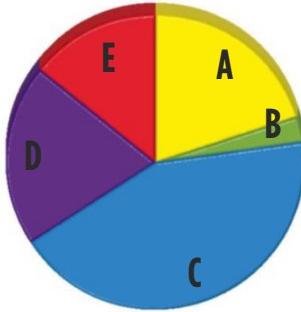
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In AP 12 August we asked...

What are your favourite types of historic buildings to shoot?

You answered...

A Churches and cathedrals	20%
B Stately homes and town houses	3%
C Castles, ruined castles and abbeys	43%
D Picturesque streets and cottages	20%
E Historic buildings aren't really my scene	14%

What you said

'There is no "all of the above" option. I don't have a specific favourite subject when it comes to historic buildings – they all have their own characteristics and all make great subjects.'

'None of the above. Old military and old industrial buildings are the best, in my eye.'

'I am especially pleased when I can find a virtually unspoiled domestic building still surrounded by similar edifices and streets.'

'It depends upon where I am, what the weather's like and what's architecturally on offer. A drastic contrast between old and new can be interesting, as can the potential for an impressionist or abstract treatment.'

'I don't really have a favourite but as round my way churches and cathedrals are somewhat more prevalent than ruined abbeys and castles, I voted for option 1.'

'While I'll take a picture of anything I find, if given a choice, the more knackered the better!'

Join the debate on the AP forum

This week we ask...

Have you ever hired a camera or rented yours out?

Vote online www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Inbox

Email amateurphotographer@timeinc.com and include your full postal address.

Write to Inbox, Amateur Photographer, Time Inc. (UK), Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7BF

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Amateur photography is not permitted during pro competitions, and at some courses there are even restrictions on practice days

Approval required

Thank you for the interesting article on golf photography (AP 22 July). However, I don't think any of your experts mentioned the restrictions on amateur photography at professional golf competitions: this is not allowed on competition days at all (professionals only). And, as I recently discovered at the Open at Birkdale, there are now even restrictions on practice days (there didn't use to be). I wasn't allowed to take my Nikon D810 onto the course because (I was told) it was too 'big and professional-looking'. In future, it seems I would have to apply for 'special approval' from the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A), which still might be refused.

There are no such restrictions on top-class amateur golf competitions, such as the Lytham Trophy, even on competition days. All you have to do is show respect for the players.

Maybe it's time for the R&A to think again. Or is it swayed by its newfound love affair with Sky Sports, I wonder?

Neil Pascoe, Lytham St Annes

Win! **SAMSUNG**

The EVO+ microSD Card has added memory capacity and multi-device functionality. This UHS-I Speed Class 1 (U1) and Class 10 compatible card is perfect for capturing photos and video recording. www.samsung.com

Not close enough

Sorry but I cannot agree with Angela Nicholson that 'Olympus... has a really healthy collection of lenses' for wildlife photography (AP, 29 July). There is no decent macro lens of a practical focal

length for insect photography. The 60mm is good optically, but far too short a focal length – and the handling in manual-focus mode is dreadful. Until Olympus comes up with a 100–120mm macro lens that has the same handling

characteristics as (e.g.) the 75mm f/1.8, I will continue to use my Pentax 100mm f/2.8 with an adapter. Even though shooting in stop-down mode can be a problem at apertures below f/8, it is far preferable to using the Olympus offerings.

Cluny MacPherson, London

On a Micro Four Thirds camera, the Olympus 60mm lens has an effective focal length of 120mm, which is a little longer than the 90mm and 100mm or 105mm lenses that are often favoured on full-frame cameras. Your 100mm lens effectively becomes a 200mm optic on Micro Four Thirds, and while it's not unheard of, it's not the commonest focal length for a macro lens, so I think you may have to continue with your Pentax 100mm f/2.8 and adapter for some time. As for the handling in manual-focus mode, the focus ring does feel a bit slack, but I like the ability to switch to 1:1 focusing and then fine-tune or move the camera or subject to get sharp focus. It would be nice to feel the end points of focusing, though.

– Angela Nicholson

Beyond repair

I recently sent my Sigma 70–200mm f/2.8 EX zoom in for service/repair after about eight years' use. It went to Japan, where it was determined that the parts required for repair were no longer available. So I have been given a brand new latest version of the lens (including built-in OS) – for the same cost as the repair! To say I'm impressed would be an understatement.

Thanks, Sigma!

Bill Houlder, Pontefract

PS – Here's a test shot of my favourite pup, Coco, which I took using the new lens.



Bill Houlder used his new Sigma lens to take this shot of his dog

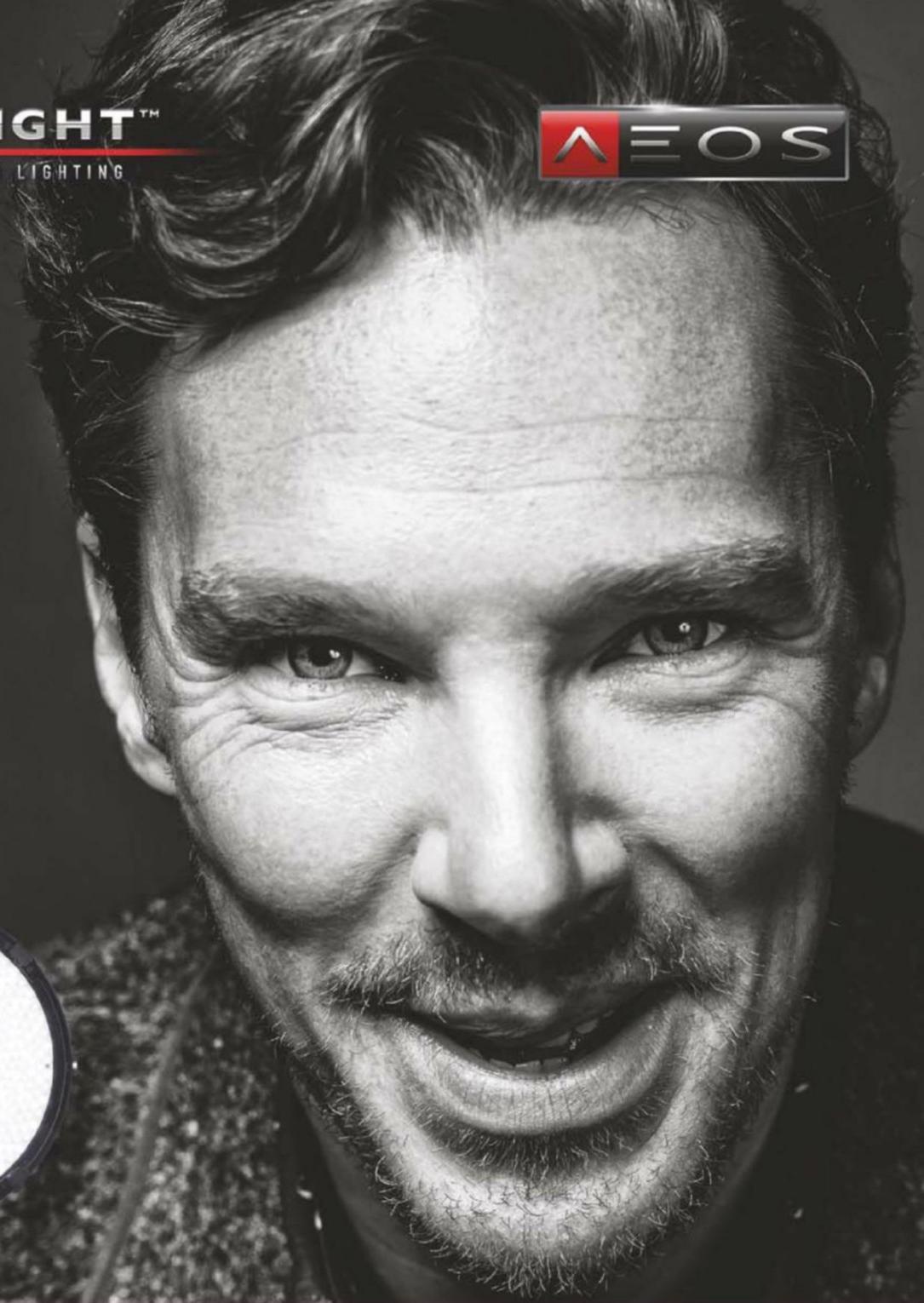


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Members of Exeter Camera Club at a barbecue



© STEPHEN LEE



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Join the Club

Exeter Camera Club

The Cardinal Newman Centre

This week we focus on a club that has been existence for almost 130 years

When was the club founded?

Exeter Camera Club was founded in 1890 and was one of the first to be formed in England. We currently have a membership of 130 with a reserve list of people waiting to join.

What does your club offer new members?

We offer a weekly meeting from September to May inclusive. We also have 'groups' attached to the club for black & white photography and visual art, while the Royal Photographic Society and the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain (PAGB) groups help those who are looking to gain a distinction. The groups meet once a month. We have a summer programme, meeting up at various venues on most Thursday evenings. As well as regular meetings, we also have a few trips away each year.

Describe a typical club meeting.

The evening is intended to start at 7.15pm, but members arrive at any time from 6pm onwards. We have notices at the start, followed by the programmed event. We stop for a drink at 8.30pm and then continue until 9.30pm-10pm.

Do you invite guest speakers?

Yes, we do invite guest speakers. We usually have 10-15 speakers during the year. This is one of the reasons Exeter is such a popular club. We try not to duplicate speakers, unless of course they are invited back by popular demand.

Do members compete in regional or national competitions?

We are not a competition-oriented club at all, only having two internal competitions a year – one print and one digital. In recent

years we have entered into one or two local and national competitions. We won the Devon Battle last year, and this year came fifth in the country in the Photography News Camera Club of The Year. We take part in the Western Counties Photographic Federation exhibitions, and some of our members enter images in salons and external competitions.

Has the club, or individual members, ever won any big competitions?

A club member was highly commended in the Landscape Photographer of The Year competition. We have a link with the New Hampshire Society of Photographic Artists and each group has visited the other, with very successful exhibitions in both places. We have recently joined up with Rennes Photographic Club in France, and again had successful exhibitions at both venues.

What about national photographic society distinctions?

We have about 20-25 members with RPS Licentiate and Associate distinctions. We also have two RPS Fellowship members. We have a number of members with PAGB distinctions and a good number who are now pursuing them.

How old are your members?

The age of our members has generally been between about 50 and 70. However, in recent years the age range has widened and we are attracting much younger members, which is good for the future of the club and helps keep us on our toes.

What are the club's goals for the future?

We feel we have a good balance of showing our members' images, along with a high calibre of guests throughout the year. The addition of the groups has proved very successful and we would add to this if there is a call. As we state on our website, our objectives are the furtherance of photographic art and technique, the exchange of ideas and mutual assistance among members in a friendly and open atmosphere.

Club essentials

Meets The Cardinal Newman Centre, Wonford Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4PF, September-May, 7.15pm-9.30pm.

Membership The annual membership fee is £50. There are no reductions for students.

Contact There is a contact page on our website with committee members' contact details on the club committee and rules page.

Website www.exetercameraclub.co.uk



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Angela Nicholson

Photographer and journalist Angela Nicholson began reviewing cameras for *Amateur Photographer* in 2004 and was technical editor before leaving for pastures new in 2010. She has tested everything from backpacks to medium format cameras, straps, compacts and software. Visit www.angelanicholson.com.





You're hired

If you have kit aspirations beyond your budget, maybe it's time to take a look at renting some gear. **Angela Nicholson** explains what you need to know

With top-end cameras and lenses (especially those used for video) costing several thousand pounds, many professional photographers regularly hire gear to supplement their own kit, yet it's something that's not that prevalent amongst enthusiasts. However, there are now several companies willing to loan gear to enthusiasts, so it makes sense to investigate the opportunities that hiring might bring you.

If you've been interested in photography for many years you may have built up an extensive collection of gear and feel that you have everything you need. However, there are always bits of kit that are just too expensive to buy – every now and again a shooting opportunity comes along that you can't quite do justice to with what you have. Perhaps you need a longer telephoto lens, a wider aperture, a faster frame rate or some more light? All of these things could be achieved by renting gear at a fraction of the cost of buying.

Canon's EF 200-400mm f/4 L IS USM with internal 1.4x extender lens, for example, is a fabulously versatile optic that gives you a focal length range of 200-560mm on a full-frame camera, which could prove very useful for a bird or wildlife photography trip. But at almost £11,000 it's hard (by which I mean almost impossible) for most of us to justify buying it for a one-off, or even occasional, use.

However, at £108 per day from Hireacamera, it becomes more feasible. Similarly, the Nikon 200-500mm f/5.6E

ED VR AF-S, which retails for a more accessible £1,100, but is still far from an 'everyday-use' optic, can be hired for £32.40 a day or £68.36 for a week. Which would you rather pay, more than £1,000 or less than £100?

Hiring kit also gives you the opportunity to double-up on your kit. For example, if you have a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV and you've been asked to shoot a wedding, you might like to hire a second body to act as a back-up and save you having to change lenses frequently. That could be the difference between missed shots and the eternal gratitude of the happy couple (not to mention another potential booking or two from guests).

Try before you buy

Another compelling reason to hire kit is to try it before buying it. It gives you the opportunity to check that a new camera, whether it's just a body upgrade or a change in system, is right for you before you spend lots of money. Wilkinson Cameras is primarily a retailer, but kit is available for hire from its Southport and Liverpool stores on a 'try before you buy' basis (visit www.wilkinson.co.uk/hire/ for more details). Calumet and Fixation will also refund up to two days' rent if you decide to buy a piece of equipment. This is great news if you're one of many photographers thinking of swapping from a DSLR to a mirrorless camera. But remember, many rental companies don't just limit themselves to cameras and lenses; most also offer lights, studio kit, tripods and supports. Some even





© TONY HOBBS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

If you're planning a one-off wildlife adventure it's worth considering hiring a lens or two

► hire out laptops in case you need something to process images with.

Make a booking

Most hire companies have a list of the kit available online and while you can usually browse through the selection to find what you want (there are often search filters to help with this) and make a booking, some companies ask that you call to check availability and book. Calling into a local store to collect and drop off kit keeps costs down, but most hire companies are willing to send gear via courier. They may be able to arrange this for you or you can do it yourself.

Charges are usually made on a daily basis and you will need to collect the kit at the beginning of the first hire day and return it (or have it packed and ready for collection) by the company's specified time on the last day. Make sure you are clear about what the collection and pick-up times are, as failure to return the kit on time may result in a financial penalty as well as extra hire cost. If something unexpected happens and you are going to be late, give the company a call; they are human after all.

Because hire companies mainly deal with professional photographers who work during the week, there are often deals to be had for renting kit for the weekend. In some cases you can get two or three days' hire for the cost of one. It's definitely worth asking.

Get covered

Naturally when you're hiring expensive gear you're going to have to provide some form of identification and you may be required to call in person to arrange the first booking. You will usually have to pay a deposit (a credit card is normally fine), although companies take a different approach depending upon the type of account you opt for. Hireacamera, for example, gives two options: with the first you have to take out its insurance and pay an excess seven days in advance of the hire. So long as there is no damage to the goods, the excess is refunded in full upon their return. Alternatively, you can opt to pay a deposit, which is usually larger than the insurance excess and at least the value of what you are hiring. Again this must be paid seven days in advance of the first hire day and it's refunded upon the safe return of the goods. If you take this option it's up to you to insure the kit.

When you take out insurance with the hire company, check what the excess is, in case the gear is damaged in your possession. Calumet adds 10% to its hire fees to cover insurance, for example, and the excess is £250.

If you decide not to take out insurance cover as part of the hire agreement, make sure that your own insurer will cover any loss or damage, pay particular attention to the individual item maximum value figure. Also, be prepared to provide proof of cover to the hire company.

Find your

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camera jungle

Rental

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2. Book over the phone:

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 - Give your photo ID and proof of address (or bring it with you for Oxford Street pick-up).
 - 3. Pick up from Oxford Street, or we can deliver for £2.99.
 - 4. Return to receive your deposit refund (the deposit charge minus the daily rental charge).

Terms and conditions apply.

Central London Pick-up

Camera Jungle

- www.camerajungle.co.uk/rental
- 0330 808 3324

Camera Jungle is mainly known as an online second-hand dealer but it also has a rental business, and you can rent anything that the company has in stock for sale. That means that the stock is constantly changing and it's worth keeping an eye on the website. The rental part of the website shows the rent and deposit for each of the routinely available products. Items can be collected from Jessops on Oxford St in London (pick-up 2-5pm, drop-off 9am-noon) or can be delivered for £4.99. Bookings are made over the phone or by email.



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our kit

Fancy hiring some kit? Here's what you need to know about eight of the most well-known rental companies



Direct Photographic

- www.directphotographic.co.uk
- 020 7620 8500

Based in London and Manchester, Direct Photographic offers Canon, Nikon, Sony, Hasselblad, Phase One and GoPro cameras for hire along with lenses, tripods, lights, light meters, computers and monitors. If you call into a store, technicians will demonstrate the product so that you feel confident you know how to use it. Payment can be made on the day or you can open a 30-day credit account. All bookings should be made via email or phone. Insurance adds 15% to the hire fee and there's a £500 excess.



Hireacamera

- www.hireacamera.com
- 020 3393 5760

In addition to a range of mid to high-end Canon and Nikon SLRs, Hireacamera offers a collection of mirrorless cameras, lenses and accessories. There are even some compact cameras such as the Canon PowerShot G7 X II and Fujifilm X100F available. As well as body-only, some cameras are offered in packages with accessories and lenses. It's easy to find the gear you want via the website, and kit is usually delivered by 12noon the day before your hire begins, while collection is the first working day after your hire ends.



Lens Pimp

- lenspimp.com
- 01752 310132

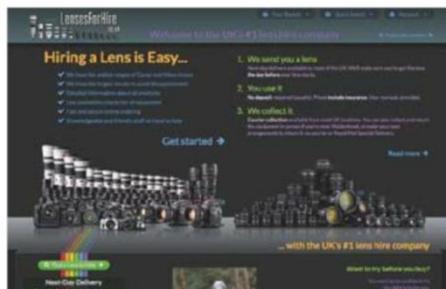
Lens Pimp has a small collection of cameras available with a focus on Canon DSLRs, and a large catalogue of Canon and Nikon lenses along with some Sony and Fujifilm optics. A deposit isn't usually required and the insurance has an excess of £180. Loans usually take three days to arrange. Kit is sent out via Royal Mail special delivery or courier, and is normally sent to arrive the day before your hire period starts. Collections can be made by arrangement or items can be posted back to the company on the last day of hire via Royal Mail special delivery.



Fixation

- www.fixationuk.com/rental
- 020 7582 3294

Fixation has a huge range of gear available for hire from all the main manufacturers and bookings may be made via its website, in-store, on the phone or over email. Fixation is also a retailer which means it can offer a 'try before you buy' service and will refund up to two days' rental on kit that you decide to buy. If you're a first-time hirer you will have to pop into the London store with some photo ID and proof of your address. Insurance costs 10% of the listed rental and is valid up to £7,500 with £250 excess.



Lenses For Hire

- www.lensesforhire.co.uk
- 0800 61 272 61

Lenses For Hire offers a collection of mid to high-level Canon and Nikon SLRs as well as Fujifilm X-series mirrorless system cameras and an extensive catalogue of lenses, with exotics like tilt-shift lenses and macro flash systems. The website is easy to navigate, and a combination of slider controls and tick boxes make it easy to find the gear you want. There's generally no deposit required and online prices include insurance that carries a £150 excess for damage or loss. Standard delivery is before 12pm and costs £12 for any number of items.



Pro Centre

- www.procentre.co.uk
- 020 7729 8822

Pro Centre can supply a wide range of high-end enthusiast and pro-level kit with APS-C, full-frame and medium-format kit available from all major manufacturers. There's also an excellent collection of lenses, lighting, computers and accessories. Before you rent anything you need to set up an account. The best option for occasional use is 'pay-as-you-go', which requires completion of an application form, proof of ID and address. The deposit is the full value of the hire kit and insurance is charged at 15% but there's no excess.



For details and how to enter visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/competitions/iet #IETPhotoComp

Tom Bryan can work on personal projects thanks to the income his kit is generating through Fat Lama



the odd corporate job but, between the two sources of income, I'm able to survive in London and work towards producing better content.

What are the other benefits of using a platform such as Fat Lama?

Traditionally, film gear is expensive to buy but hiring it from a professional hire company is not cheap, either. Most hire companies require you to have your own insurance before hiring equipment and if you don't, they will charge you a massive deposit which can almost be the equivalent of purchasing the gear anyway. Fat Lama is so much more affordable for everyone concerned.

Renting through Fat Lama, you deal directly with the owner of the kit. This person knows their gear inside out, and so they are able to give you advice and make sure you have everything you need for your shoot. They can be flexible about meeting you any hour of the day and at a location convenient for both of you.

When you search online it's amazing to see how local kit is to you. In the future I imagine Fat Lama to be as widespread as Pret, with a Canon EOS 5D available at just about every street corner in London!

Recently I purchased a new camera with the aim of paying it off within a year, just through hires alone, and I'm already well on track to do this. Income for those

renting out their kit and savings for those renting it, are two obvious benefits of Fat Lama but by far the most surprising one has been meeting the people who have hired my gear. I'm interested to discuss how they use the kit, and love seeing the work they produce. In an industry that relies on collaboration, Fat Lama brings people to my front door and provides the best networking opportunity that a lazy networker like myself could ask for.

Do you think borrowing, as opposed to ownership, is the way forward?

Absolutely, borrowing is the way forward. It's given me a chance to earn money when I might otherwise be earning nothing. Sharing is the future, especially in big cities like London. We all live on each others' doorsteps but we are terrible at communicating. Any platform that helps bring people together is only going to add value to the places they work in.

Final thoughts?

Fat Lama's customer support is great. If you have a problem with anything, you can contact the team via the online chat section of the website and they respond immediately. At the moment they are being very generous with credit, to ensure everyone gets used to using the service, so make sure that you sign up sooner rather than later.

The borrower



Usman Dawood is a professional commercial and architectural photographer, a writer for Fstoppers and a YouTuber based in Leeds. He regularly hires camera equipment through Fat Lama for work projects.

Where did you first come across the Fat Lama platform?

I came to know of the platform through my wife who started using it after seeing some ads on Facebook.

Is it easy to set up an account?

Setting up a profile is straightforward. I enjoy the fact that if you want to lend or borrow kit, you need to verify yourself. This gives some much-needed peace of mind.

How long have you been using Fat Lama?

A few months now but even in that short time I've seen a good number of people coming to the site.

How often do you borrow kit?

Once every couple of weeks depending on the project I'm doing and where I'm doing it.

What kit do you borrow?

Generally speaking, cameras and lenses. I also enjoy renting old film equipment, and unique cameras and lenses with a certain look or feel.

Do you borrow from the same lender?

I haven't yet but some of the lenders I have got to know well have described how they now have regulars for certain equipment.

How much money have you saved borrowing on Fat Lama?

It's difficult to give an exact figure but it's in the hundreds of pounds.

What are the other benefits of using a platform like Fat Lama?

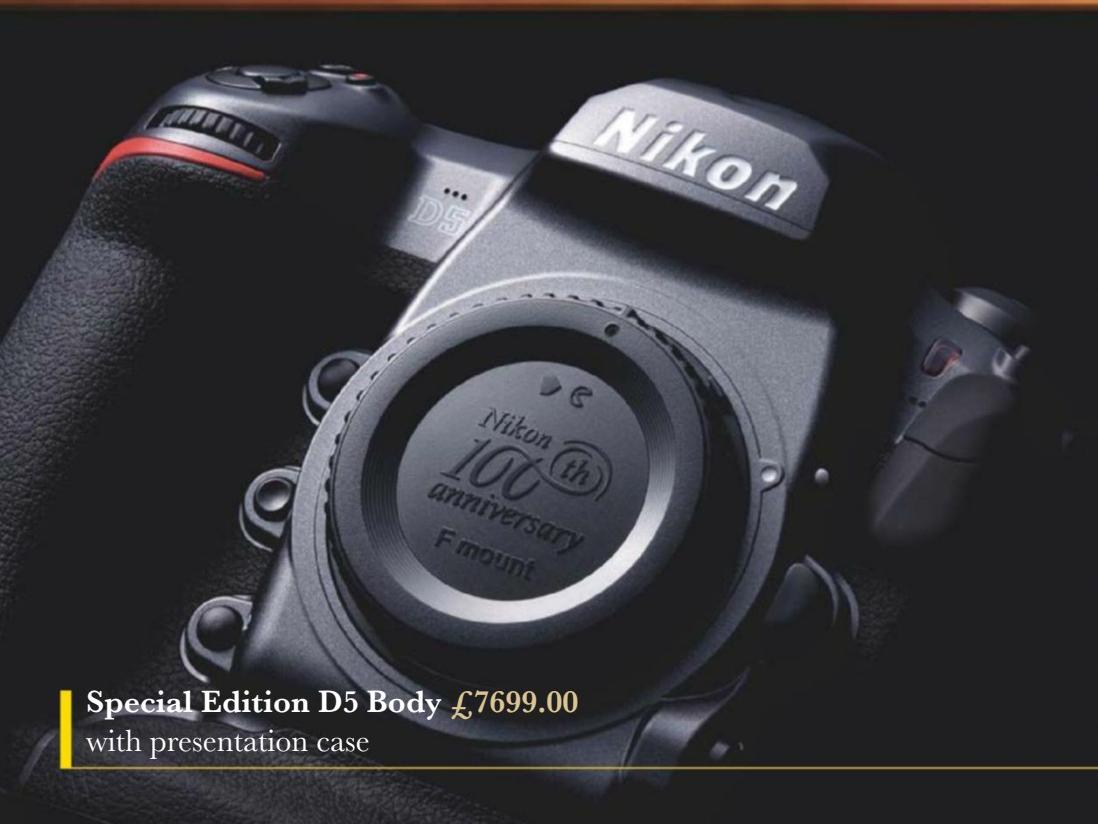
Not having to put down a deposit is very useful since it means you don't have a hole in your finances, however temporary. The personal touch a lender can give is another benefit. For example, I had never used a Panasonic GH5 before but the lender was kind enough to spend some time going through the camera menus and features to ensure that I got the best out of it. The last thing you want is to have to figure out how something works in the middle of a shoot.

Do you think borrowing, as opposed to ownership, is the way forward?

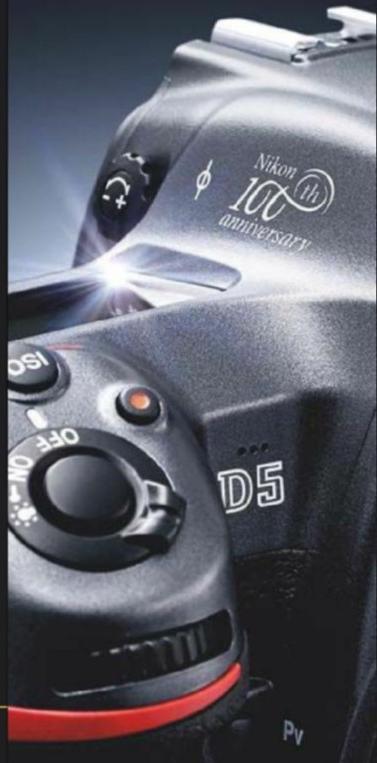
I don't think it's one or the other. There are people who want to own their equipment, and I own a number of cameras and lenses myself. Renting fills a gap, but it's not an either-or scenario.

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A world of colour

Colour management should be an integral part of all photographers' workflow. Three professionals explain the importance of it in their work

Every photographer knows that colour management is important, but not every photographer bothers with it in their workflow, seeing it as an overtly complex and time-consuming process. But integrating colour management into your workflow is far simpler than many photographers realise. As the window to your digital photography, your monitor is a tool you need to be able to trust.

There are a number of reasons why monitor calibration should be a key part of your workflow. For example, your eyes will never be as accurate as a colour-calibration device. You can't rely on your eyes to adjust your monitor correctly, as factors such as fatigue and time of day affect how they see colour. And monitors display colours differently. What may look perfect on one monitor could look very different on another. Monitors are not built ready calibrated and their

colours shift over time. If your monitor isn't displaying the true colour of your images, you will waste time editing.

A correctly calibrated monitor will save you time, as image colours are often not 'true to life'. Sometimes photos won't look realistic on your monitor, as skin tones will be off and whites won't be pure. Calibrating your monitor will fix this. With an uncalibrated monitor, the colours in your prints won't match what you see on-screen.

We spoke to three top professional photographers to find out why colour management is so important in their workflow. Read on to find out how you can apply their tips to your own work.

'If your monitor isn't displaying the true colour of your images, you will waste time editing'



©VERITY MILLIGAN

HOW TO CALIBRATE YOUR MONITOR – THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

DATACOLOR is a leading colour management solutions company that offers a number of software options depending on your needs and capabilities as a photographer. Each option is easy to use, with a simple step-by-step wizard that guides you through the initial five-minute calibration process. Datacolor recommends performing a monthly recalibration, which takes just over two minutes, to keep colours consistent. Its popular Spyder5 family of colorimeters provides fast and easy calibration to deliver colour accuracy. To find out which member of the Spyder5 family would suit your needs, you can view a comparison chart on the Datacolor website at www.datacolor.com.



Warm up

Let your monitor warm up for at least 30 minutes before you begin the calibration process. Make sure there's no direct light falling on the display. Reset the monitor controls to the factory default settings.



Install software

Install the Spyder5 software on your computer, then plug your Spyder5 into a powered USB port on your computer and launch the software to begin the registration process. Use the serial number in your Spyder5 package to activate it.

Sutton Park at dawn
Fujifilm X-T2, 50-140mm, 1/150sec
at f/6.4, ISO 320



Verity Milligan

Verity is a Birmingham-based award-winning professional photographer specialising in rural and urban landscapes, and commercial and advertising commissions. She has recently started using Datacolor products to support her photographic workflow.

www.veritymilliganphotography.com

MOST photographic careers tend to be an evolution, whether you're an amateur or a professional. The more time you spend shooting and editing, the more knowledge you glean. I've always found that I'm striving to create images that better represent the vision I had in my head before I pressed the shutter button. For me, this equates to recreating that scene as faithfully as I could hope, especially with regard to landscape photography, and recently my own photographic evolution has led me into the world of colour management.

Most photographers who grew up and honed their skills in the digital age have little idea about the expertise that goes into printing your work, and I can certainly count myself among the many who are really only just beginning such a journey. Colour management and profiling are essential if you want your final prints to look as good as they possibly can. Ensuring my printer is calibrating to my monitor is essential, otherwise I could easily end up with wasted ink and prints that just don't quite cut it. Products such as Datacolor Spyder Print are great tools that help with this process and improve my workflow.

Of course, printing is the outcome of many hours of editing in front of a monitor, and the relationship between the two shouldn't be underestimated. I predominantly work on an Apple MacBook Pro and iMac 5K, both of which sport colour-rich retina displays. Using Spyder5 Express I'm able to ensure that the colour of the screen is spot on, which then subtly changes the white balance of my imagery. Before calibration, both my monitors were erring on the cool side, so this process has eliminated the blue tint that would have been otherwise imperceptible to my eye. This ensures that the exported images, when they go to print for clients, are as faithful a replication as possible. Colour management

ensures that my imagery maintains integrity and my clients know that they're going to receive a consistent final outcome.

What is your photographic approach?

My approach is fairly holistic. There are times when I will have a specific plan and shot in mind, and this is especially true when shooting for a client. However, if I'm shooting for myself, a lot of the time I let the landscape lead me. Much of my landscape work is shot with a telephoto lens, as I really enjoy picking out details rather than capturing the whole scene. It allows my literal mind to become a little more abstract. I'm always trying to capture the feeling of the scene in front of me how I perceive it. I see the world in glorious Technicolor and this is often conveyed in my imagery. There is so much beauty around us, whether in the countryside or in the heart of a city, and my objective is to capture a passing moment that will never again be fully replicated. Although it's a simple approach, at times it can be quite powerful.

Why is accurate colour important within your workflow?

Colour is incredibly important to any photographer, but I would say I'm particularly obsessed with replicating accurate colour as I perceive it. As I evolve as a photographer, I'm more interested in ensuring that my images are as accurate as possible, eradicating colour casts and other potential contaminates. I've recently got into printing my own work, and this means accurate colour is even more important than before. Often there is a disconnect between what I'm seeing on the screen and what is printed, so it's incredibly important to get to grips with the technical aspects and manage that relationship between screen and physical print.

Follow step-by-step

Once the software has been installed, follow the step-by-step on-screen instructions. Remove the lens cap from the Spyder5 colorimeter.



Hang unit

Hang the Spyder5 unit over your display when the on-screen prompt appears, using the lens cap which slides on the USB cable as a counterweight to keep it in place. If necessary, angle your display back to keep the Spyder5 flat against your screen.



Calibration process

The calibration process will begin. The Spyder5 software will walk you through the calibration process and create a custom display profile, which your operating system and colour-managed applications will use to correct your displayed colours.



Cover shoot for
Dreamingless
Magazine
Canon EOS 7D,
24-70mm, 1/200sec
at f/7, ISO 100



Holly McGlynn

Holly is a fashion photographer from Dublin based in London. She has an MA in photography and is a gold-medal winner in the 2015 Prix de la Photographie Paris.
www.hollymcglynn.com

How did you get into photography?

I moved to London nine years ago to study photography at Goldsmiths. After graduating, I tried lots of different genres and ended up in fashion photography about five years ago.

What is your photographic approach?

I always say that your most important job as a photographer, before you take a single frame, is to ensure that everyone else on-set feels included, valued and empowered to do their job. If you don't do that, you've failed as a photographer. So I always ensure that the whole team has seen the mood board and understands what we're trying to achieve that day. If everyone is on the same page and relaxed, then you will always get better results. I also think you get the best work if you're prepared to take risks – I'll do almost anything to get the shot.

Why is accurate colour important within your workflow?

My work is defined by colour; it's got to be bold and punchy to be on-brand. Anything else just isn't right for me.

'I also think you get the best work if you're prepared to take risks – I'll do almost anything to get the shot'

NATASHA TOTH ©

Editorial shoot in
Debut Magazine
Canon EOS 7D, 24-70mm,
1/160sec at f/8, ISO 400



© HOLLYMCGLYNN



Olivia Bossert

Olivia is a fashion and wedding photographer based in Cornwall. She moved from Switzerland when she was 18 to study fashion photography in Falmouth. www.oliviabossert.com

How did you get into photography?

When I was about 15, I stumbled upon Flickr while doing research for an art project at school, and I was instantly hooked. I had never realised how amazing photography could be, or how creative! I discovered people my age doing such wonderful things with their cameras that I felt very inspired to give it a go myself. I'd always been a creative person, but had felt frustrated with drawing and painting, and not being able to turn something that I had in my head into a reality.

Photography made it much easier for me to satisfy my creative hunger.

What is your photographic approach?

I'm always aiming to inject romance into my work. That stems purely from the fact that I'm a huge romantic at heart. It helps that most of my work revolves around wedding dresses, which are romantic in themselves. I love to add depth as well, by using blurred-out objects in the front of my lens, and shooting at a low aperture.

Why is accurate colour important within your workflow?

Colour is everything. It allows for consistency, mood, emotion and storytelling. Without being able to see the exact colours within my imagery, I can't tell the story I hope to through my images.

Street spirit

Landscape photographer **Dave Fieldhouse** set himself one month to shoot a different genre, discovering that it's rewarding to step outside your comfort zone once in a while

The summer months are notoriously difficult for landscape photographers. Sunrise and sunset are both at anti-social hours, and once the sun has risen it generally creates light too harsh for pleasing images. For these reasons May, June and July tend to be barren months for me. I tend to get grumpy and frustrated, and my camera gathers dust. This year, I decided to try something different.

Aside from the occasional dog portrait, I have only ever taken

photographs of landscapes, shying away from people, plants, cars, architecture, abstracts – and definitely weddings. When I bought my Fujifilm cameras I joined a couple of Fujifilm groups on social media that were not genre specific, and began to get interested in street photography. On 21 May I decided I would try this type of photography for one month and attempt to amass a dozen usable images, all the time writing a blog of my experiences.

I set myself some ground rules. First, I wouldn't take any images



ALL PICTURES © DAVE FIELDHOUSE

featuring people I knew. Secondly, I would not take photographs of homeless people (a staple subject for some). Thirdly, I would stick to a fixed focal length, in this case 35mm. Finally, I wouldn't just shoot in black & white.

At a safe distance

The thought of taking photographs of people has always filled me with dread (I don't know anyone who is happy with how they look in a picture), so the idea of taking them of strangers was just off the scale.

To start with, most of the images I took were from a distance, where the subject of the image was, most likely, unaware of me. At this point I didn't know how people would feel about some guy snapping away at them, and feared any confrontation this might cause. At least from my





vantage point I knew I had a head start (my fear turned out to be totally unnecessary).

Although my first images could generally be considered safe, I enjoyed the processing and the final image, and fairly quickly began to look around for more quirky compositions. The majority of my business week takes place in Birmingham, a city with bags of potential for this style of image. I soon found myself taking my camera with me and looking for opportunities on my way to meetings or at lunchtimes.

Movement

Capturing movement in a static image is something I don't get to do that often with landscapes. If anything, I remove the element from my images, especially at the

Above: Modern architecture provides plenty of photographic opportunities
Fujifilm X-Pro2, 35mm, 1/170sec at f/16, ISO 1000

coast when I use an ND filter to slow the shutter speed and smooth out the water in the ocean. I didn't use a tripod for this project as they are impractical and attract attention, so finding the best shutter speed to capture the motion, yet shooting fast enough to keep some of the image sharp, took several attempts (more than several, actually) to get right.

Abstracts and architecture

I have always had a casual interest in architecture. I even considered doing a degree in it when I left school. Eventually, I ended up working in an industry associated with construction, and have done so for more than 20 years. I have witnessed a transformation in Birmingham during this time. I don't necessarily like all of the new

Left: Making use of reflective surfaces can add impact
Fujifilm X-Pro2, 35mm, 1/350sec at f/5, ISO 800

buildings but on the whole it looks a lot better now that it used to (some of the regeneration planned for the next 10 years looks even better).

The same applies to many other cities around the UK. New, shiny buildings are rising up in place of ugly, concrete boxes from the '60s, and the renovation of older buildings, from a time when even a warehouse was designed to look beautiful, is great to see.

Modern architecture provides a number of options for a photographer, when we're prepared to open our eyes. On a visit to a client's office towards the start of the project, I noticed a balcony view six storeys up.

It's a building I have worked in and on for over ten years, yet I had never looked at it in this way. I ended up shooting it from all



This Blue Fin Tuna was painted by London-based artist Louis Masai in Birmingham

levels. It led to an interesting conversation with the building's estate manager who, it turned out, was a photographer himself. The scene worked in colour, mono and split-toned. It wasn't an especially comfortable shot for a vertigo sufferer like me but was eye-catching nonetheless.

Some buildings simply provide the canvas for an artist. Certain parts of many UK cities actively encourage graffiti in their cultural and creative quarters. The street artist Banksy has helped to popularise the talent of the graffiti artist and while there's very little creativity involved in taking a photograph of a painting by another person, taking one of graffiti does help to document an area and a time. I couldn't resist

photographing the huge fish that adorns a wall of a nondescript car park in the city centre. The artist is Louis Masai who takes all the credit for this. If this is your kind of thing, I strongly suggest you search him out on Google; you're in for a treat.

Reflections

Thanks to all the shiny materials used in a modern city, there are reflections everywhere. During my research into street photography, I took many images featuring glass, chrome, puddles, canals and brass that provided reflections, and for good reason. During the project's 31 days it rained once when I was out, so puddles weren't going to feature, but Birmingham does have more canals than Venice (pub trivia



This shot worked well in monochrome and colour
Fujifilm X-Pro2, 35mm,
1/10sec at f/2.8, ISO 6400

Always carry your camera with you and you'll never miss a photo opportunity
Fujifilm X-Pro2, 35mm,
1/340sec at f/4, ISO 800



Photograph people from a distance to build up your confidence
Fujifilm X-Pro2, 35mm,
1/200sec at f/2.5, ISO 100





answer) and millions of windows, so I knew it wouldn't be a struggle to shoot some examples.

Final thoughts

By this point I think you should be able to tell I loved my new challenge. Although it was pretty much new to me, I found myself seeing photo opportunities all around. I was still shooting more duffers than keepers, but that's also how it is with my landscape work.

I did, however, find myself taking more photographs in those 31 days than I have ever done before. It felt like I was given an open remit to process whatever I wanted. With landscapes, I take every effort to make the final image as realistic as possible. The processing of each image is very similar, whereas in this project I was let loose to try new things.

I felt my confidence increase by week three, even approaching strangers with just a simple 'would you mind if I took your picture?' and to my surprise I didn't get a single refusal. I ended up having several interesting conversations with folk, learning more about Birmingham than I would ever have done otherwise. I'm hoping that some of the things I learned during



Dave Fieldhouse was born in Walsall in 1973. A mechanical engineer, he also has a passion for photography. His landscape images have already won several awards and he regularly features in internationally circulated magazines. Unfortunately, his camera time has to fit around his day job but he is hoping that his new interest in street and urban photography will provide him with plenty of opportunities to expand his portfolio.



Monochrome or colour

When I looked into the genre it was instantly obvious that most street photography was black & white. I can understand this to a certain extent, but I don't buy into it completely. I decided to set my camera to shoot mono JPEG images, but also capture a raw file so that I had the option to process in colour if I thought it would suit better. Shooting in mono helped me to identify scenes with a good tonal range quickly. Unlike shooting landscapes, you don't have time to wait for the light; you generally have to use the light you're given and make the most of it.

In my mind, the image above was perfect for mono. The preview on the LCD on the back of the camera was in black & white and I thought it looked perfect. Once I had processed the file I realised it worked in both colour and black & white. The scene wasn't set or staged, although I don't think I could have directed it any better if I'd tried. I only managed the one frame before the guy in the blue shirt vanished.

this period will transfer to my landscape work which, if I'm honest, I have felt is a bit too conventional at times.

I don't think this is the end of street photography for me; I've loved it! The images I have shared so far haven't been as universally popular as my landscape photographs, although, in truth, many of my followers have little or no interest in this genre.

Some of the comments have been encouraging and generally positive. I have never had a landscape shot referred to as 'cool' before, so that's great. I've actually had some success in a weekly competition I've been trying my luck with over the past three years, twice coming third during the month. That's something I have never achieved with a landscape, so maybe there's something in street photography...

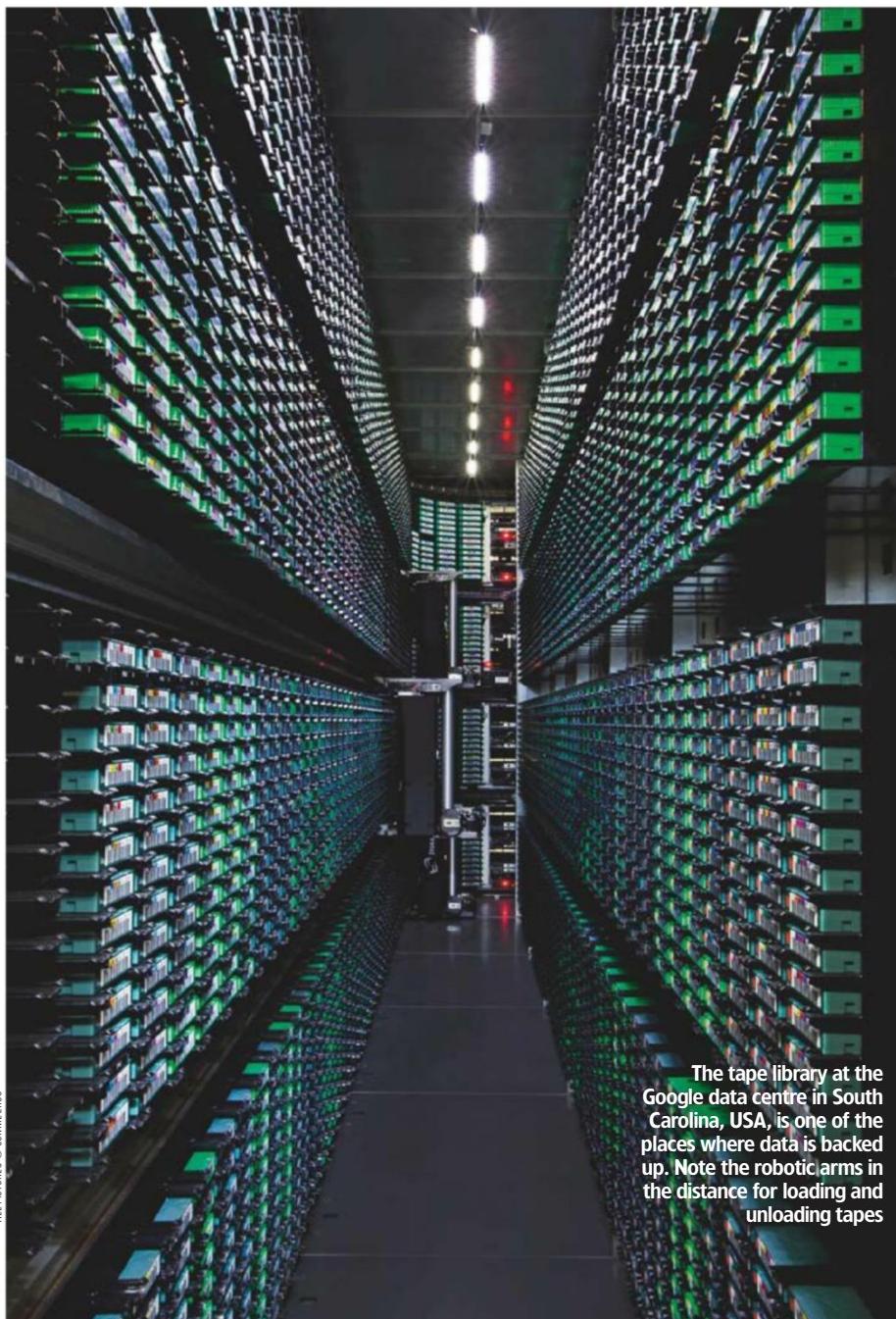
There's certainly a lot to be said for pushing yourself. I think most of the photographers I know are a little like me – insecure and craving the approval of others. It's good to step out of your comfort zone. I'm certainly not averse to trying something new again – as long as it's not weddings!

AP



Information is beautiful

Shooting Google's vast data centres presented some interesting challenges for architectural photographer **Connie Zhou**, but she's not easily intimidated, as **Tracy Calder** discovers



In 2012, Connie Zhou received an email that would launch her career as a professional architectural photographer. Google was looking for someone to document its global data centres, and it was keen for Connie to put in a bid. 'I was straight out of school and super excited,' she recalls. 'There were eight data centres at the time – there are a few more now – and the plan was to spend a week shooting each one.'

A month later, Connie received a call to say that her bid had been successful, and she was soon jetting off to locations across Europe and the US.

Despite being a security-conscious company, Google was surprisingly accommodating to Connie and her assistant. 'They let us have access to everything,' she reveals, 'but we had an escort and we weren't allowed to touch anything without permission. They wanted 25 pictures of each site, but I took hundreds, sometimes thousands of shots. It was really good fun.'



The CMS detector for the Large Hadron Collider at CERN near Geneva in Switzerland

At times, even Connie's escort was surprised at the access they had been given. 'I remember going to certain areas and our contact saying, "This is so weird that you guys are allowed to go here." I just had to make sure that I didn't interfere with anyone while they were working.'

However, the job was not without its challenges. Google's data centres are huge, and previous visitors have admitted to feeling quite overwhelmed by the sheer size of the buildings and the scale of the equipment they contain. But Connie is not easily intimidated. 'The bigger the better,' she laughs. 'It's more exciting that way and there are more possibilities.'

Hearing this, it comes as no surprise to learn that Connie is a big admirer of Andreas Gursky and Robert Polidori – two photographers well known for their large-scale colour work. 'Their pictures are so grand, so big and beautiful,' she enthuses, 'but their work is more like fine art, whereas I have never wanted to be a fine-art photographer.'

Finding inspiration

Connie was just a teenager when she made the decision to pursue a career in photography. 'I was about 17, so I guess that's kinda young,' she admits. She grew up in New York City and attended LaGuardia – the performing arts high school that inspired the 1980 hit musical *Fame*. 'I went to *Fame* and I was an art major,' she laughs. 'It's where I picked up photography.'

You could say that her passion for art is in her blood. Connie's father is a graphic designer and formerly studied at FIT (the Fashion Institute of Technology) in New York. She explains that it's the graphic nature of architectural spaces that really inspires her.

This love of shooting architecture in a 'graphically pleasing' way is evident in all Connie's work, from her highly polished shots of retail spaces and residential buildings to the work for Google and her personal project at CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research).

Connie Zhou



Connie Zhou is inspired by contemporary spaces that not only embrace functionality but also serve as works of art. Her passion lies in capturing larger-than-life experiences with her camera. She enjoys shooting anything that looks like it came from outer space. www.connierzhou.com

Each image exhibits a perfect blend of line, space, form and colour. Nothing is included that doesn't belong there. But producing such deceptively simple pictures takes a lot of hard work, and can even be physically challenging at times.

'When you're shooting residential interiors you're often working in quite small spaces, and sometimes you've got to hide in the closet to get the shot,' laughs Connie. 'The limitations can certainly be interesting.'

Lighting limitations

While Connie didn't have to hide in any closets to shoot Google's cables, routers, switches and servers, she did have to contend with other issues relating to size and space. Having arrived at each location, she spent the first day of each trip carrying out a recce, sometimes using an all-terrain vehicle to cover as much ground as possible.

'The sites are so big, and there are so many things to shoot, that half the time I was just trying to figure out how to fit it all in,' she recalls. 'I was waking up every morning in time for the sun to rise and leaving once the sun had gone down. There were some very long days and it was exhausting, but fun.'

Other challenges included getting high enough to obtain a good vantage point. Connie often found herself searching for a lift or something to hang from. But by far the greatest obstacle was controlling the light. 'Data centres are so evenly lit, but I didn't want that kind of look,' she explains. 'I wanted some stark, clean pictures of what a data centre looks like, but I also wanted something most people never get to see – shots with the lights off.'

Convincing people to turn off the lights when they are working was sometimes tricky, so Connie often settled on a compromise: mixing her own light with available sources.

Amazingly, Connie used just one light (a Profoto D1) and her assistant walked it around the space. 'We put it all together in post production,' she explains. 'I prefer it that way. I do a lot of post in general, but I tend to do more for interior architecture than the tech stuff.'

Perhaps more amazing is the fact that Connie doesn't use a tilt-and-shift lens to prevent the common distortions encountered when shooting architecture. When I react with surprise, she just laughs. 'It's mainly because I am an impatient person,' she explains. 'I learned how to shoot on a large-format camera, but I really hated it because it was just so slow and the equipment was so heavy. I know a tilt-and-shift lens would probably allow me to get to places that I can't with a "normal" lens, but I just haven't got the patience I'm afraid!'

Keeping it simple

Connie likes to keep the equipment she uses to a minimum. For the Google project her main camera body was a Canon EOS 5D Mark II paired with either a 16-35mm, a 24-70mm or a 24-105mm lens. This line-up has served her well, but she recently upgraded to a Canon EOS 5DS R and discovered a new



favourite lens: the Canon EF 11-24mm f/4L USM. 'When it comes to architecture I like to keep things simple,' she explains. 'Sometimes I even work without a tripod! I did this on a shoot a few weeks ago and the client was, like, "Are you sure?" But the results speak for themselves.'

Connie is clearly no slave to technology, and the confidence she has in her own ability is supported by an incredible back catalogue, and a client list that includes IBM, CERN and, of course, multinational technology giant Google. Her enthusiasm is infectious and even after a tiring flight from Las Vegas to New York City the passion she has for her work is audible down the phone line.

AP

The IET (Institute of Engineering and Technology) is running a photography competition to celebrate the progressive face of engineering and engineers. You can enter up to five images across five categories: Design & Production, Digital, Energy & Environment, Robotics, Structure and Transport. For full details visit bit.ly/ietcompetition. The closing date for entries is 31 August 2017.

'When it comes to shooting architecture I like to keep things simple – sometimes I even work without a tripod!'



Retired detector on view at CERN near Geneva in Switzerland



Colourful pipes send and receive water for cooling the Google facility in Douglas County, Georgia, USA

Connie's top tips

Aim high

Gain some height to secure a fresh viewpoint. Use a ladder, scan the building for a lift or a set of stairs, or find something safe to hang off or climb on to. Don't be afraid to ask for help to secure the position you need for your pictures.

Research the subject

Whatever I'm shooting, I like to know what it does. This information helps to inform the way I approach a subject. I don't think knowledge clouds your creative vision – quite the opposite. Do your research, and ask questions.

Accept some discomfort

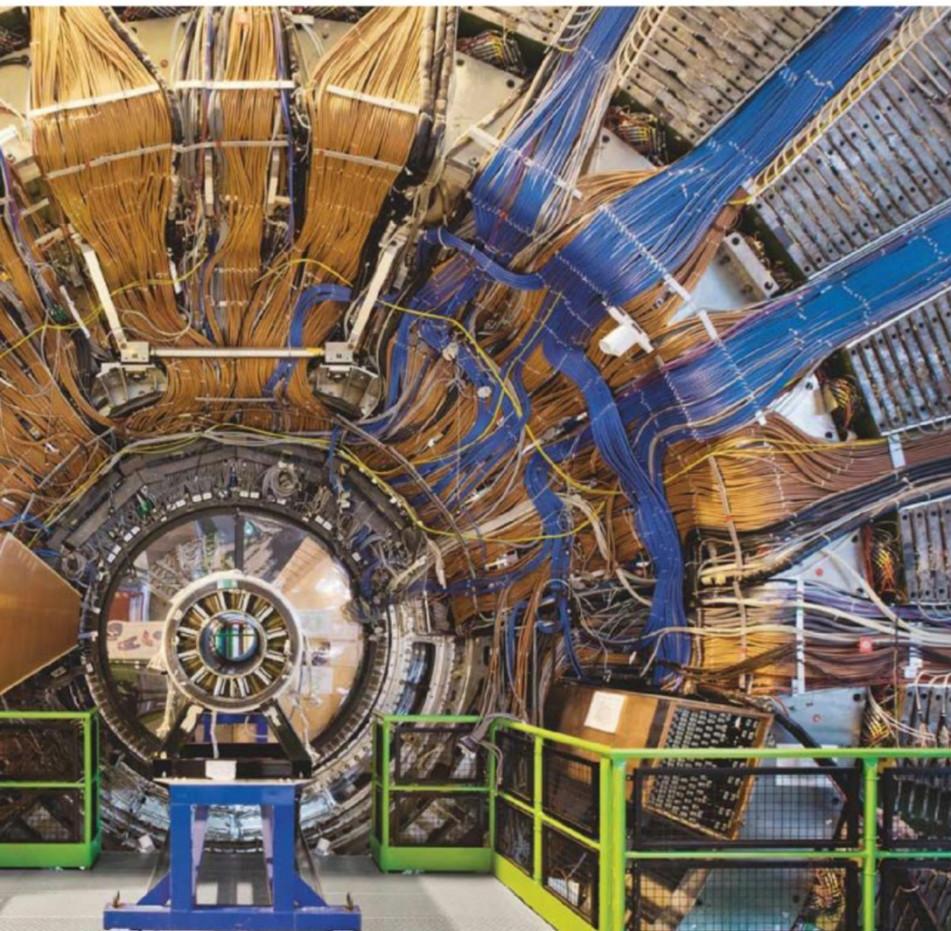
Sometimes you need to squeeze yourself into a closet to get the shot you need, so be prepared to encounter obstacles and try to think about how you will overcome them. If you can, plan in advance.

Do a recce

It's important to do a recce. Where possible, spend a day at your chosen location and observe the way the light (both natural and artificial) changes throughout the morning and afternoon. Make notes, take pictures with your phone and do what you need to.

Don't be a slave

Don't bring everything along on a shoot – choose your equipment wisely. Technology can sometimes get in the way of creativity, so keep things simple. Consider if you really need that tripod, tilt-and-shift lens and flashgun.



The IBM Q Lab at the TJ Watson Research Center in New York

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Europe's best products

We reveal which cameras, lenses and accessories emerged as winners of the prestigious EISA awards 2017-2018

What is EISA?

The European Imaging and Sound Association is a collection of photographic, audio and video magazines in which members pool their skills and knowledge to award the best products in a wide range of categories each year. The awards are intended as a guide for specialist consumers. Only one magazine from each country may belong to any panel. *Amateur Photographer*, a founding member of the association, represents the UK for the photographic section of the awards.

Learn more about EISA at www.eisa.eu/awards.

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Editor's comment

THE European Imaging and Sound Association (EISA) comprises an international membership of more than 50 special-interest magazines, who meet several times a year to assess the very best photographic, video, audio, home theatre, in-car and mobile products on the market. As well as two members from the USA, this year EISA welcomed three Australian members – well, if Eurovision can do it, so can we!

AP is part of EISA's Photo Panel, alongside 14 of the best photographic magazines across continental Europe. Like us, all these publications employ rigorous testing processes and are respected in their home countries for the quality of their reviews.

Every June all the panels meet to determine the year's winners, and these are then presented at an Awards ceremony in Berlin, Germany. It's always a difficult job, and it becomes ever more

challenging because cameras across the board just get better and better all the time. But over the following pages we reveal those cameras, lenses and accessories that the Photo Panel selected this year as being the cream of the crop, the crème de la crème, the besten der besten and so on. Each of these winners is deserving of the prestigious EISA 2017-2018 award.

Nigel Atherton Editor



EISA
PROSUMER
COMPACT
SYSTEM
CAMERA
2017-2018

Sony a6500

The a6500 is a very small compact system camera offering professional performance. Whether you are a 4K video or stills photographer, the a6500 offers excellent image quality with its 24.2-million-pixel Exmor CMOS APS-C-sized sensor, high speed and great choice of lenses. The 5-axis image stabilisation works with Sony E-mount lenses as well as A-mount lenses with adapters. The 425 phase-detection AF points cover almost the whole picture frame, while the 3in tiltable touchscreen lets you choose focus points with your finger. The camera supports up to 11 frames per second shooting with continuous AF and metering with a buffer that supports up to 269 pictures in one sequence.



EISA
CONSUMER
DSLR
CAMERA
2017-2018

Canon EOS 77D

The Canon EOS 77D adopts many key features from the semi-professional EOS 80D. The 24.2-million-pixel CMOS sensor achieves a better dynamic range than its predecessor. A big advantage is the Dual Pixel CMOS AF that enables a very fast and smooth autofocus during live view and video. Combined with STM or Nano USM lenses, the focus is very quiet. The viewfinder autofocus is also greatly improved, with 45 cross-type points. The new DIGIC 7 processor delivers enough power for fast continuous shooting (6 frames per second) and Full HD-video with high frame rates (1080/60p). The top-plate LCD and the quick control dial allow fast operation. Other modern features are the articulated touchscreen and Wi-Fi, which is accompanied by Bluetooth for easy access.



EISA
PROFESSIONAL
DSLR
CAMERA
2017-2018

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV

The Canon EOS 5D Mark IV is the tool of many professional photographers all over the world. Compared to its predecessor, the EOS 5D Mark III, Canon has increased the still image quality significantly with higher resolution and wider dynamic range, while the autofocus has become more sensitive. The video function is also much more advanced with high-quality 4K recording and fast autofocus in live view mode. The Canon EOS 5D Mark IV also features the innovative new Dual Pixel Raw feature, which allows sharpness and background blur to be fine-tuned later. All in all, the Canon EOS 5D Mark IV will remain a class-leading camera for several years to come.



EISA
COMPACT
CAMERA
2017-2018

Sony RX100 V

The Sony RX100 V is a high-tech masterpiece in a very compact body. Like its predecessor, the RX100 IV, the RX100 V offers a 1.0-type sensor and an excellent retractable OLED electronic viewfinder. The new 20.1-million-pixel Exmor RS CMOS image sensor, in conjunction with the fast BIONZ X image processor and a new front-end LSI, made it possible for Sony to shorten autofocus response time to 0.05sec and speed up continuous shooting to 24 frames per second – with AF/AE tracking so that in a series of a moving subject, every picture stays in focus with the correct exposure. Besides the ability to shoot 4K videos, the RX100 V offers super-slow motion up to 1,000 frames per second, silent shooting and a multi-function control ring for personalised use.



EISA
PROSUMER
DSLR
CAMERA
2017-2018

Nikon D7500

The D7500 is an advanced DSLR camera that packs much of the innovation of the acclaimed D500 into a lightweight, robust and more affordable body. Using the same 20.9-million-pixel image sensor, processor and wide ISO range as the D500, the D7500 is a capable and versatile tool in the hands of a passionate photographer. With a burst speed of 8 frames per second and Nikon's proven 51-point AF system, it is well suited to capturing fast action. Thanks to Nikon's SnapBridge technology, transferring images to a smart device is fast and seamless.



**Best Product
2017-2018**

**PHOTO & VIDEO CAMERA
Panasonic Lumix DC-GH5**

**EISA
PHOTO
& VIDEO
CAMERA
2017-2018**

Panasonic LUMIX DC-GH5

The Panasonic DC-GH5 focuses all the brand's know-how in both photo and video. The body is well balanced, weather resistant and has an excellent electronic viewfinder. With a 20.3-million-pixel Four Thirds sensor it delivers good picture quality up to ISO 3200, with excellent autofocus and internal stabilisation. In video it provides an excellent compromise between image quality, features and price, and allows recording up to 4K/60p 4:2:2 10-bit onto the memory card without recording-time limitation. With high-end features such as a high-speed 6K Photo mode, slow motion, automatic focus transition, Vlog and an XLR module for sound recording, the GH5 offers endless possibilities for creative video production.



**Best
Product
2017-2018**

CONSUMER COMPACT SYSTEM CAMERA

Fujifilm X-T20

**EISA
CONSUMER
COMPACT
SYSTEM
CAMERA
2017-2018**

Fujifilm X-T20

The Fujifilm X-T20 is a compact, mirrorless consumer camera that produces sharp, clean images and 4K video quality at a competitive price. At the heart of the camera is its 24.3-million-pixel X-Trans CMOS III sensor and X-Processor Pro, which are jointly responsible for the extraordinary image quality. Despite its comparatively affordable cost, the X-T20 uses the same high-quality sensor and processor as the highly regarded X-T2 and X-Pro2. The touchscreen operation and custom AF-C setting are also big pluses. Finally, the X-T20's sharp and highly detailed 4K video recording makes this camera a great all-rounder.



**Best
Product
2017-2018**

**SUPERZOOM CAMERA
Sony RX10 III**

**EISA
SUPERZOOM
CAMERA
2017-2018**

Sony RX10 III

At just 1,095g, the Sony RX10 III is the perfect camera for sports, nature and wildlife photographers looking for an easy-to-carry all-in-one solution. The stunning ZEISS Vario-Sonnar T* 24-600mm lens provides a 25x zoom range with a fast f/2.4-4 maximum aperture, while the Exmor RS 1.0-type sensor, super-fast autofocus and Optical SteadyShot ensure sharp images free from camera shake. In addition to its incredible focal range, the RX10 III can shoot macro from as close as 3cm from the lens, while the silent shutter means you won't disturb sensitive nature subjects. The RX10 III isn't just great for stills – it also shoots 4K video and there is also the option to shoot at 1,000 frames per second for a dramatic 40x slow-motion effect.



EISA
PROFESSIONAL
COMPACT
SYSTEM LENS
2017-2018

Sony FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM OSS

The Sony FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM OSS is an impressive lens covering the most popular angles for sports and action photography. Sharpness is extremely high and evenly distributed with almost no visible fall-off towards the edges. Sharpness is retained across the zoom range, even with tele-converters. It features a floating focusing system, implemented in an α zoom lens for the first time, that contributes to an impressive minimum focusing distance of merely 0.96m. The 11 rounded aperture blades ensure a beautiful bokeh, while the autofocus speed is super quick, in particular with the very fast Sony α9. Finally, the FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM OSS is built for heavy use under all weather conditions.



EISA
COMPACT
SYSTEM
ZOOM LENS
2017-2018

Olympus M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 12-100mm F4.0 IS PRO

The M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 12-100mm F4.0 IS PRO is an incredible travel lens as well as a general-purpose zoom lens. It covers an 8.3x zoom range with a constant F4.0 maximum aperture and built-in optical stabilisation. Built to withstand dust, moisture and rough use, the M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 12-100mm F4.0 IS PRO is as sharp as many prime lenses from super-wide angle to telephoto, and its smooth and silent focusing makes it a favourite for video as well as still photography. Combined with Olympus's latest pro cameras, it reduces camera shake with up to 6.5 stops, and at just 562g you can take it anywhere.



EISA
DSLR
LENS
2017-2018

SIGMA 135mm F1.8 DG HSM | Art

The SIGMA 135mm F1.8 DG HSM | Art is an extremely capable performer. The sharpness is better at its maximum aperture of F1.8 than its competitors are when stopped down. There is simply no reason to not use this lens wide open. SIGMA has managed to make the autofocus fast and accurate, which is impressive for such a bright lens, and the wide aperture creates a particularly beautiful background blur (bokeh).



Linhof Techno, Phase One P45+, 40mm Rodenstock Digaron-W lens. 1/8 sec @ f/16, iso 50

Crummock Water

The English Lake District has been immortalised in literature, poetry, painting and photography since the dawn of the Romantic era. I am lucky to have friends living in the Lakes, and it was they who guided me to this magnificent prospect of Crummock Water early one autumn morning.

The sun rose into a mostly clear sky, but as soon as the cloud built over the central lakeland fells the light became inspiring and ever-changing for almost an hour. It was one of those occasions to be grateful for digital photography, for in days past this would have cost a fortune in exposed large format film!

Great perspective, cool foreground shadow light and warm sun rays, but highlight/shadow range was extreme. Fortunately, a medium 0.9 ND graduated filter (three stops) did most of the work needed to balance the dynamic range discrepancy. LEE have made medium grads for me, and others, to order for a while; these are now being made available to all. Carrying several different strengths of grad enables me to tune exposure balance really accurately in camera.

It was a thrill to subsequently discover a painting by JMW Turner of Crummock Water, with stormy lighting and a rainbow over the lake, made over two hundred years earlier.



LEE 0.9 ND
medium grad filter



Medium grad filter



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QAP code 13AV



EISA
DSLR ZOOM
LENS
2017-2018

Tamron SP 150-600mm F5-6.3 Di VC USD G2

The second generation (hence 'G2') of Tamron's SP 150-600mm F5-6.3 Di VC USD ultra-telephoto zoom lens makes an attractive lens even better. The speed and accuracy of the autofocus system have been improved, as has the effectiveness of the built-in VC (Vibration Compensation) system. A 'Flex Zoom Lock' mechanism keeps the lens barrel fixed at any chosen focal length. The fluorine coating and moisture-resistant construction make the lens less vulnerable to dirt, dust and moisture. The optional TAP-in Console allows the owner to easily update the firmware as well as customise features including fine adjustments to the autofocus and vibration compensation.



EISA
PROFESSIONAL
DSLR LENS
2017-2018

Canon EF 16-35mm F2.8L III USM

The Canon EF 16-35mm F2.8L III USM has been long awaited by many professional photographers and exceeds expectations. It's better built than its predecessor and gives astounding sharpness over the entire image, even at its full opening of F2.8. At 16mm it actually outperforms many ultra-wide-angle prime lenses. Distortion is low, while the anti-reflective coating very effectively reduces ghosting and flare. The Canon EF 16-35mm F2.8L III USM is built for everyday professional use and delivers an image quality that will satisfy even the most demanding users.



EISA
COMPACT
SYSTEM
LENS
2017-2018

Sony FE 100mm F2.8 STF GM OSS

This 100mm telephoto prime lens offers the outstanding resolution of the G Master series, combined with STF (Smooth Trans Focus) optics for breathtaking bokeh. This lens has been designed to produce extraordinarily smooth, natural bokeh without vignetting. It also features fast, precise, and quiet DDSSM autofocus, and is capable of shooting 0.25x magnification close ups. Built-in Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation minimises any blur caused by camera movements during long shutter times. The Sony FE 100mm F2.8 STF GM OSS upholds the premium G Master concept in all respects.



Tamron 18-400mm F3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD

The Tamron 18-400mm F3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD challenges our preconceptions about what we can expect from a superzoom lens. In addition to offering the broadest zoom range of any interchangeable lens in the world, at 22.2x, it also includes an effective three-stop image stabilisation system to improve sharpness at lower shutter speeds, and weather-resistant seals to allow users to keep shooting even in adverse weather conditions. Although especially suited to travel, safari and sports photographers, the Tamron 18-400mm F3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD will also appeal to any photographer looking for a single lens solution to cover all their shooting needs.



EISA INSTANT CAMERA 2017-2018

Fujifilm Instax SQUARE SQ10

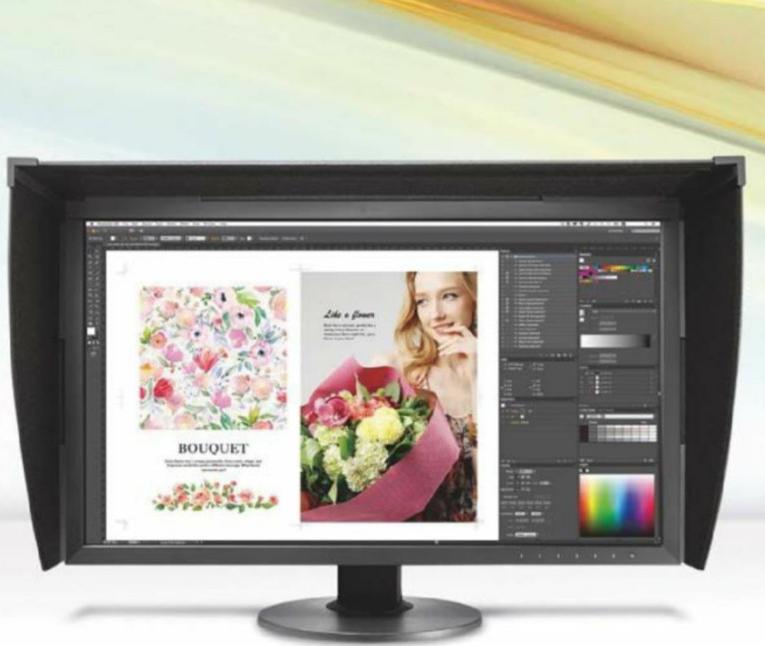
The Instax SQUARE SQ10 is the first hybrid instant camera that lets you take and print square photos (62x62mm). You can brighten, darken or add vignettes to your images or choose from 10 creative filters to apply, before you decide to print them. The bright LCD viewfinder makes it easy to create and edit your pictures, which are recorded in the internal memory or on a microSD card, so you can share them with your friends and family.



EISA PRODUCT OF THE YEAR 2017-18

Sony a9

The Sony a9 is a groundbreaking mirrorless camera that in many ways surpasses traditional DSLR rivals. Thanks to an innovative design, the 24.2-million-pixel full-frame image sensor captures up to 20 frames per second in full resolution with no EVF blackout and offers completely silent, vibration-free shooting at up to 1/32,000th second. The new super-fast autofocus system, with 693 phase-detection AF points covering 93% of the image area, ensures that even fast-moving subjects are in focus. The 5-axis image stabilisation allows a 5-step slower shutter speed. The oversampling process and full-frame pixel read-out result in excellent 4K movie quality.



EISA
PHOTO
DISPLAY
2017-2018

EIZO ColorEdge CG2730

The EIZO ColorEdge CG2730 fulfils the needs of a professional photographer. With a screen size of 27in and a high resolution it can show an image at A3 size and still leave ample space for the adjustment palettes of your software. The picture quality is outstanding, with a high contrast ratio (1500:1), the ability to reproduce deep blacks, and marvellous colours that cover 99% of the Adobe RGB colour space. The most innovative feature is its easy-to-use built-in calibration sensor, which swings onto the screen when calibrating and allows different profiles to be saved, eliminating the need for third-party devices. Furthermore, the display comes with a shading hood.



EISA
SMARTPHONE
CAMERA
2017-2018

Huawei P10

Huawei's latest flagship is an improvement in almost every respect. Starting with its design, including a diamond-cut chassis and brave new colours, through to the faster and more secure Kirin 960 Octa-core chipset, and finishing with the shining star – the Leica-branded cameras. The dual system on the back of the Huawei P10 now has a 20-million-pixel monochrome sensor, and a 12-million-pixel colour sensor, enabling the introduction of a brand-new Portrait mode for stunning portrait photography. On the front is an 8-million-pixel F1.9 selfie camera, also supporting the portrait mode and including Leica technology that is smart enough to recognise if there are more people in the picture, and consequently make the shot wider. For an even more professional photography experience, EISA recommends the Huawei P10 Plus.



Other 2017-2018 EISA awards

Hi-Fi

WIRELESS LOUDSPEAKER

KEF LS50 Wireless

BEST VALUE

LOUDSPEAKER

DALI SPEKTOR 6

STANDMOUNT

LOUDSPEAKER

Dynaudio Contour 20

FLOORSTANDING

LOUDSPEAKER

Q Acoustics Concept 500

HEADPHONES

Denon AH-D7200

DAC/HEADPHONE

AMPLIFIER

Pro-Ject Pre Box S2 Digital

BEST VALUE TURNTABLE

Pro-Ject Essential III

Flexi-Range

HIGH-END TURNTABLE

ELAC Miracord 90

INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER

Hegel Röst

BEST VALUE AMPLIFIER

NAD C 338

HIGH-END STEREO SYSTEM

Marantz SA-10 & PM-10

HI-FI INNOVATION

Devialet Gold Phantom

MULTIROOM STREAMER

Yamaha WXC-50

Yamaha RX-V483

SOUNDBAR

LG SJ9/LG SJC9A

SOUNDBASE

Sonos PLAYBASE

HT HIGH-END

DALI PHANTOM S Series

HT SOLUTION

Denon HEOS AVR

HT SUBWOOFER

SVS PB16-Ultra

Hi-Fi/Mobile

PORTABLE DAC/

HEADPHONE AMPLIFIER

RHA Dacamp L1

HT Audio

HT SPEAKER SYSTEM

Focal Sib Evo

HT RECEIVER

HT Video/Display

HOME THEATRE TV

Sony KD-65ZD9

LCD TV

LG 55SJ850V/LG 55SJ8509/

LG 55SJ8500/LG 55SJ850T

SMART TV

Samsung QE55Q7F

OLED TV

LG OLED65E7/LG OLED65E7V/

LG OLED65E7P/LG OLED65E7T

BEST BUY TV

TCL U55C7006

BEST BUY OLED TV

Philips 55POS9002

HOME THEATRE

PROJECTOR

Epson EH-TW9300W

Mobile

BEST SMARTPHONE

Samsung Galaxy S8/S8+

CONSUMER SMARTPHONE

Honor 8 Pro

BEST BUY SMARTPHONE

NOA Element H10le

MOBILE HEADPHONES

JBL Everest Elite 750NC

MOBILE SPEAKER

JBL Boombox

WIRELESS IN-EAR

HEADPHONES

Senheiser MOMENTUM

In-Ear Wireless

WEARABLE DEVICE

Huawei Watch 2

MOBILE AUDIO PLAYER

FiiO X5 3rd gen

Mobile/Photo

SMARTPHONE CAMERA

Huawei P10

In-Car Electronics

IN-CAR HEAD-UNIT

KENWOOD DMX7017DABS

IN-CAR HD PLAYER

Clarion NX807E

IN-CAR SMART UPGRADE

Mosconi GLADEN RC-CAN

IN-CAR SUBWOOFER

GLADEN PRO 10

IN-CAR ACTIVE

SUBWOOFER

Pioneer TS-WX70DA

IN-CAR PROCESSOR

Helix DSP.2

IN-CAR AMPLIFIER

Mosconi GLADEN PRO 5|30

IN-CAR INTEGRATION

Hertz H8 DSP

IN-CAR SPEAKER SYSTEM

Vibe Audio CVEN62C-V4



Engineering victory

Enter this exciting photography competition, capturing the creative and progressive face of engineering and engineers

Eorget outdated images of hard hats and oily men with spanners in workshops; engineering is an exciting and fast-changing sector, shaping the world around us and improving the quality of our everyday lives. From a photography perspective, modern engineering yields many fascinating subjects. So *Amateur Photographer* is proud to support this major new contest, the IET International Engineering Photography Competition.

To enter, all you need to do is take images of engineering-related subjects that truly capture the dynamic, creative and progressive face of engineering and engineers today. Winning photographs will help to challenge public misconceptions of engineering and demonstrate the ingenuity, breadth and vibrancy of its world. For full details, see bit.ly/ietcompetition.

CATEGORIES AND PRIZES

You can enter up to five photos across any of the following five categories:

Design and Production

This celebrates innovation around the design, development and production of the things that people need. Images might include those of mechanics, materials and manufacturing.

Digital

This category includes photography on the theme of electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data.

Energy and Environment

A focus on engineering and technology within our environment, as well as energy efficiency, energy services, facility management and alternative energy technologies.

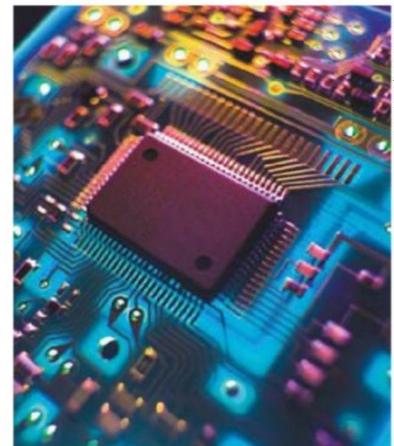
Robotics

This category looks at the design, construction, operation, and application of any robots or robotics.

Structure and Transport

This encompasses architecture, buildings, bridges, cityscapes and all forms of transportation.

The five adult category winners win £500, while the five primary youth category winners and the five secondary youth category winners will each receive £150. Furthermore, one overall winner will then be selected from the 15 winners, and awarded an extra £250. On top of the cash prizes, a selection of the winning images will be made into a photographic display at IET London: Savoy Place in central London.



HOW TO ENTER

To enter, please send in your images by 23:59 (BST) on Thursday 31 August 2017 to photography@theiet.org along with an entry form, available to download from bit.ly/ietcompetition.

The competition is open internationally, and split into three categories: adult (18+), primary youth (5-11) and secondary youth (12-17). Anyone who meets the age criteria is able to enter, completely free of charge.

For your chance to win, visit bit.ly/ietcompetition



Nikon D5600

The **D5600** is Nikon's latest intermediate-level DSLR. **Audley Jarvis** takes a look at what's new and what improvements have been made over the D5500

The Nikon D5600 is a direct replacement for the two-year-old D5500 that has now been discontinued. The new model is primarily targeted at photography enthusiasts looking to buy their first DSLR and who have a little more money to spend, along with existing owners of older entry-level Nikon DSLRs looking to upgrade.

Features

In terms of its headline specifications, the D5600 is almost identical to the D5500 it replaces. That said, the newer model does benefit from a few useful new features. Chief among these is the addition of Nikon's proprietary SnapBridge technology that uses Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology for wireless image-transfer duties between the camera and a connected

smartphone or tablet. A timelapse mode has also been added, and the D5600 also comes with a brand-new kit lens in the shape of the Nikon AF-P DX 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR. This employs a retractable design for added compactness and comes with Nikon's Vibration Reduction (VR) image-stabilisation technology built in. Unlike the AF-S DX 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR II that came with the D5500, there is no VR on or off switch located on the lens itself – you'll need to use the in-camera menu instead. Neither is there an MF/AF switch, although manual override is available by default.

Aside from these subtle additions, there isn't a great deal of difference between the D5600 and its predecessor. In keeping with the D5500, the D5600 is fitted with a 24.2MP APS-C CMOS sensor. This provides ample

resolution for larger prints, along with a generous degree of image-cropping flexibility. As with previous models, the sensor forgoes an optical low-pass filter in order to maximise sharpness and fine detail, and the D5600 also employs the same Nikon EXPEED 4 image processor that was used in the D5500.

Shutter speeds range from 30-1/4000sec, while sensitivity ranges from ISO 100-25,600. Still-image capture options extend to large (24MP), medium (13.5MP) and small (6MP) JPEGs processed in-camera, while those looking for more versatility in post-production can choose between 12-bit and 14-bit lossless raw. Video capture is possible at 1080p full HD or 720p HD at up to 60fps, and the D5600 also sports a dedicated microphone jack, although there's no headphone jack.



Data file

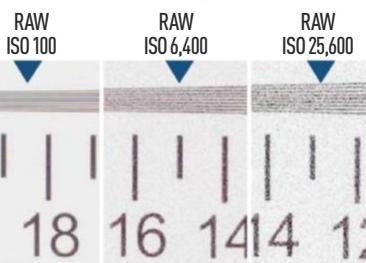
Nikon D5600

Price	£650 body only £685 with 18-55mm lens
Sensor	24.2MP APS-C CMOS
Image processor	Nikon EXPEED 4
Output size	6000x4000 pixels
Kit lens	Nikon AF-P DX 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR
Shutter speeds	30-1/4000sec, Bulb
ISO	100-25,600
Exposure compensation	±5EV in 1/3 or 1/2 EV steps
Drive mode	5fps continuous shooting
LCD	3.2in, vari-angle, TFT LCD with 1.04 million dots
Viewfinder	Pentamirror, 0.82x magnification, approx 95% coverage
Video	Full HD (1920x1080)
Memory card	SD, SDHC, SDXC
Power	EN-EL14a Li-ion battery Approx 820 shots per charge
Dimensions	124x97x70mm
Weight	465g (with battery and card)

Nikon D5600

Resolution

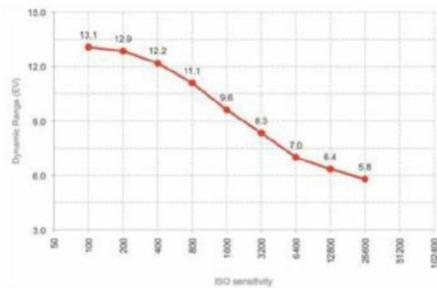
Below are details taken from our resolution test chart pattern (shown right)



JPEGs shot at ISO 100 return a figure of 3300l/ph, while their manually processed raw counterparts are capable of resolving almost 3700l/ph. For JPEGs, resolution remains at or above 3000l/ph until a credible ISO 1600, although it's possible to eke out 3000l/ph or more from raw files right up to ISO 6400.

Dynamic range

At lower sensitivity settings, results hover 0.5EV to 1EV ahead of the D5600's main rivals. Dynamic range remains above 12EV until ISO 800, where it drops to 11.1EV. The trade-off for low-sensitivity dynamic-range performance appears to come at the cost of high ISO dynamic-range performance, though, which generally lags behind that of its competitors.



Noise

At lower sensitivities there is little difference between JPEGs and manually processed raw files in terms of detail and sharpness. By ISO 800, the effects of in-camera JPEG noise-reduction smoothing leads to the loss of some detail, whereas this can be retained with raw files. This is even more apparent at ISO 1600, where JPEGs display a marked loss of fine detail.



The main addition to the D5600 is undoubtedly SnapBridge, which uses Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology to establish an always-on connection to a smartphone or tablet. It's designed to automatically transfer all captured images from the D5600 to your device for sharing, but you can choose to manually transfer specific ones yourself. They can be transferred at their original size, or limited to 2MB per image in order to save memory. The main benefit of SnapBridge is that Bluetooth consumes less power than Wi-Fi, thereby extending the camera's battery life. You'll need to install the SnapBridge app on your phone first, which is free to both Android and iOS users.

Unlike the cheaper D3400, which only uses Bluetooth connectivity, the D5600 also includes Wi-Fi. This allows you to use SnapBridge as a remote control for your camera, complete with a live view feed. You can select a point of focus by tapping the viewfinder on your smartphone's screen, but you can't change any key camera settings remotely via the SnapBridge app. This feels rather primitive in contrast to other manufacturers' systems, which all let you change shutter speed, aperture, ISO and so on directly from your smartphone.

Body and design

The D5600 is one of the smallest and lightest DSLRs on the market. It's even slightly smaller than the cheaper D3400. While overall build quality obviously isn't in the same league as more expensive Nikon DSLRs, its polycarbonate shell feels robust enough to soak up the odd minor knock. It isn't weather-proofed so you'll want to take care when using it in the wet.

Despite its relatively small size, the D5600 offers a deep finger grip that, combined with the ridged thumb rest on the back, offers a reassuringly secure grip. Overall, it feels nicely balanced in the hand and handles very well. General operation is quick and efficient thanks primarily to the camera's large display and responsive touchscreen. Our only minor gripe is that it's easy to move the active AF point inadvertently with your nose when holding the camera at eye level, but the touchscreen can be turned off if you find this a problem.

Buttons and controls are generously spaced and clearly labelled, although unlike all its main rivals, the D5600 lacks any buttons that provide direct access to commonly used settings such as ISO, AF mode and white balance. If you want to change any of these, by far the quickest way is to press the 'i' button, which takes you to a streamlined camera settings interface, from where you can access and change the most commonly used settings using the touchscreen.

Performance

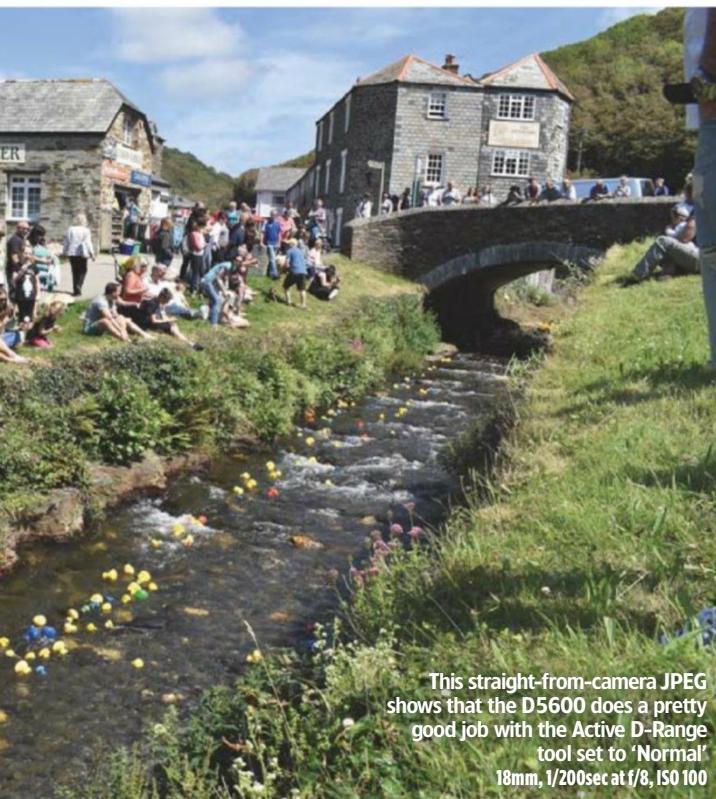
The D5600 is equipped with a slightly larger than average 3.2in rear display – all its main rivals sport 3in monitors. This is of the side-hinged, vari-angle design that allows



you to position the screen at just about any angle you can think of, as well as fold it in towards the camera for added protection. Above the display the D5600's optical viewfinder provides a bright and clear view of 95% of the frame, with key shooting information displayed directly below.

Autofocus is taken care of via Nikon's Multi-CAM 4800DX module and employs 39 individual AF points, including a block of nine cross-type AF points in the centre. This works extremely well and is certainly a step up from the 11-point AF system of the cheaper D3400, delivering speedy and accurate phase-detection autofocus through the viewfinder. While the D5600's live view AF isn't quite as lightning fast as the Dual Pixel AF technology that underpins the Canon EOS 800D, it's not far behind and still impressively quick. The new 15-55mm AF-P kit lens is also silent when focusing, which means there is no sound to be picked up when shooting video.

With its maximum burst speed of 5fps, continuous shooting isn't a key strength of the D5600. In fact, all its rivals can shoot slightly faster, even if it's only by an extra frame in the case of the Canon EOS 800D and Pentax K-70. Perhaps more tellingly, the D5600 also falls behind the competition when it comes to how many consecutive frames can be captured before the frame rate drops below 5fps. With a 16GB SanDisk Extreme Pro Class 10/U3 SDHC card inserted, we were only able to record ten consecutive raw images at 5fps, while for raw+JPEG the figure dropped to just five frames. By way of comparison, the 800D can shoot 25 consecutive raw files and around 22 raw+JPEG. Nikon definitely needs to catch up here with its next revision.



This straight-from-camera JPEG shows that the D5600 does a pretty good job with the Active D-Range tool set to 'Normal' 18mm, 1/200sec at f/8, ISO 100

For and against

- + Very good image quality
- + Small and lightweight
- + Excellent touchscreen and general handling
- + SnapBridge makes light work of image transfer
- Touchscreen can't be disabled
- JPEGs can be a bit on the dark side

Verdict

WHILE the D5600 doesn't redefine what can be expected from an upper entry-level DSLR, it nonetheless builds upon the firm foundations of previous models in the line to deliver a good range of features, intuitive handling, decent performance and very good image quality at a highly competitive price.

Image quality, as we'd expect, is very good indeed, with punchy JPEGs with accurate colour. If we have one small criticism it's that the metering tends to prioritise highlights over shadows, which can lead to slightly dark-looking JPEGs when shooting in bright sunlight. In all other respects, though, image quality is very good, with higher sensitivity performance being a notable strength. It's possible to get good



results right up to ISO 6400 – especially if you're prepared to put in a bit of time in Lightroom.

Overall, the D5600 is very much an evolutionary model rather than a revolutionary one. That said, it remains a very good camera in its own right and holds up well against the competition. Factor in its competitive pricing and we have no hesitation in recommending it to readers.

**Amateur
Photographer**
Testbench
Recommended

FEATURES	8/10
BUILD & HANDLING	9/10
METERING	8/10
AUTOFOCUS	8/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	8/10
IMAGE QUALITY	8/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	8/10

Focal points

As an upper entry-level model, the Nikon D5600 offers a few advantages over the cheaper D3400

Live-view lever

While the live-view lever on the top plate might feel over-engineered, it does fall within easy reach of your shutter finger, making light work of flicking between the optical viewfinder and live view.

Timelapse mode

The D5600 offers a dedicated interval-shooting mode, whereby images shot at predetermined time intervals can be transformed into creative and highly visual movies. This feature is absent on the D3400.

Active-D Lighting

Nikon's proprietary (JPEG-only) processing tool is designed to lighten shadow areas and preserve highlight detail when the camera is faced with high-contrast scenes.

Mode dial

The D5600's mode dial is nicely streamlined. While both cameras offer PASM, auto and effects modes, the D5600 dispenses altogether with the D3400's handholding guide mode.



Wireless connectivity

Alongside Bluetooth, the D5600 benefits from Wi-Fi connectivity that enables it to make use of SnapBridge's limited remote-control functions.

Rear LCD display

The 3.2in/1.04-million-dot vari-angle display provides touchscreen control over the camera.



ONA Bond Street

Geoff Harris checks out a stylish new shoulder bag for mirrorless cameras or smaller SLRs

● £219 ● www.onabags.com

THE days of 'any colour camera bag you like, so long as it's black', are long gone. There is now a wide range of eye-catching receptacles for your camera and accessories. A relatively new name in this market is ONA. The company was founded in 2010 by New York photographer Tracy Foster. Its products mix retro charm with quality materials, chic design and practicality. The Bond Street bag on test here is made from full-grain leather and features antique brass hardware. Although it's designed for mirrorless and compact cameras, you could squeeze a small SLR and a prime or kit lens in there, too.

First impressions are of a well-made bag with a sturdy strap and fittings, crafted from pleasingly distressed leather. The Bond Street features a closed-cell, foam-padded interior with a removable padded divider. You certainly feel comfortable trusting your expensive camera and lens to its foamy embrace.

The bag is reasonably roomy, although the zip pocket on the back feels a bit cramped. You can get a smartphone, batteries or memory card holder in there, but not much more. There is another roomier pocket at the front but it can't be zipped. The side pockets are pretty tight, too, so not much use for anything fatter than a few pens.

The Bond Street looks very smart. A few of my unreconstructed male friends said it looked like I was toting a handbag, but being a metrosexual type, this didn't bother me at all...

I can see the Bond Street bag being useful for street photography or relatively undemanding travel work. For more ambitious projects, though, such as a wedding, the poor storage space could get frustrating. A courier-style shoulder bag, which is spacious without being bulky, would be a smarter choice in these circumstances.

On the positive side, the build quality of the Bond Street is excellent, and it's nice to see a sturdy zip. It's annoying when makers expect you to shell out top dollar for a bag, then equip it with weedy zips that don't survive much pulling around in the field.

Verdict

A good choice for the style-conscious, mirrorless camera owner who doesn't need to lug around lots of gear, and ideal for a day's shooting around town, or in a relatively undemanding foreign location. Even allowing for the fact that it's a small bag, it still feels a bit cramped, though, and it's not particularly cheap. The lack of a quick release press-stud on the buckle can also slow you down. Even after packing away your camera in the bag, there are times you might need to whip it out fast...

At a glance

- Handcrafted with full-grain leather
- Side weather flaps
- Light weight (0.77kg)



Brass buckles

Retro-looking, quality brass buckles look nice, but a quick-release press stud would be handy, too.

Back pocket

The zippered back pocket can take a phone and some batteries, but not much more than that.

Internal dividers

The internal foam protector and dividers are of high quality.

Side pockets

The side pockets can accept a pen, toothbrush or slim torch.

**Amateur
Photographer**
Testbench
★★★

INSIDE THE BOND STREET

The interior dimensions of the Bond Street bag are 16.51L x 20.32H x 10.16D cm. Like the Bowery bag from the ONA range, the Bond Street can also be stowed as an insert to protect your camera further in a larger bag by detaching the strap.

Tech Support

Email your questions to: apanswers@timeinc.com, Twitter @AP_Magazine and #AskAP, or Facebook. Or write to Technical Support, Amateur Photographer Magazine, Time Inc. (UK), Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7BF

Nikon D750 recall problem

Q I have owned my new Nikon D750 for a few weeks and haven't noticed any issues with it, but a fellow camera club member mentioned that Nikon has recalled some D750 cameras to fix a problem with the shutter. I was also told there have been a number of recalls and that even some of the latest cameras may be susceptible to the problem. What should I look out for and what should I do if there is a problem with my camera?

Dean Townsend

A There has been an ongoing issue with batches of D750 cameras since the model's launch in September 2014. It's not an issue with the shutter, although the symptoms may lead you to think that. It's more to do with reflections inside the mirror box under certain shooting conditions that cause a flare-like brightness to appear in the frame. According to a statement on the Nikon website: 'We have received indications from some users that when photographing scenes in which a bright light source, such as the sun or high-intensity lighting, is at a certain position along the top border of the frame, flare with an unnatural shape may sometimes occur in images captured with the D750

digital SLR camera.' If you Google 'D750 flare problem' you can find a link to the Nikon advisory, which also provides a serial number checker to verify whether or not your own D750 is at risk. Nikon will fix affected D750s free of charge.

Buying a retro-look digital camera

Q I'm looking to buy a digital camera. I have read various articles, all of them going on about the speed of this and the speed of that, and now I am a little confused. I love the look of the old 35mm Nikons, such as the F-301 I own. The retro look is going to be a major factor. I would also like a viewfinder. Electronic is fine and it doesn't have to be in the middle, as per my F-301, so the rangefinder look is OK, too. I would love a Nikon Df but they are too expensive for me. I have been looking at models such as the Sony Alpha, Canon M3 or M5, and Fujifilm X-T10 or X-Pro1. I think I want an interchangeable-lens camera, as I would like to grow my skills and start to learn full manual mode.

Alan Pendlebury

A Some might argue your F-301, from 1985, is far from retro, but I digress. All the choices you have listed



If you suspect your D750 is affected by the 'flare problem', check its serial number on the Nikon website



X-Rite's ColorMunki Photo allows you to create a custom profile

Creating a custom ICC profile

Q When my local photography studio closed down recently I acquired several lots of heavyweight fine art printer paper in a variety of finishes in A4 and A3 sizes at a cheap price. The problem is that I have no idea who manufactured the paper, or even if it's more than one maker. I have an Epson Stylus Pro 3880 printer and I've only ever used Epson papers, so matching the paper types to the printer is basically guesswork in the settings. The results I have been getting have varied according to the different paper types in the Epson driver, but none has been right. How can I get the correct colour profile? **Hardy Andrews**

A While we should all know about calibrating our displays, calibrating printers is not so well appreciated. If you use only papers sold by the manufacturer of your printer, then usually there are choices in the printer settings for those papers. These settings will invoke a predetermined ICC (International Colour Consortium) profile to ensure that colours you see on the screen translate into colours that are laid down by the printer when it prints. The way light is reflected from the dyes and/or pigments on the paper differs from one paper to the next. This is because the surface of the paper absorbs or spreads the droplets of ink differently from one paper type to another. Some professionals think colour characteristics of the same paper change from one batch to another. You don't have to depend on the manufacturers' profiles and, of course, if you don't have a profile you will need to get one made. These are called custom profiles and you can get them done professionally or you can use profiling gear yourself. The process involves printing a test swatch and then using a special scanner to evaluate the swatch and calculate a custom ICC profile.

look good. Don't forget Olympus, Panasonic and Pentax. The retro look has been a feature of DSLRs for more than a decade, as shown by the Panasonic Lumix DMC-L1 from 2006, for example. Fuji has taken this to a fine art with the X-Pro range,

while Olympus has also revived 1960s and 1970s brands like the Pen and OM for the digital era. There aren't really any 'bad' cameras out there, so the final choice is really down to you.

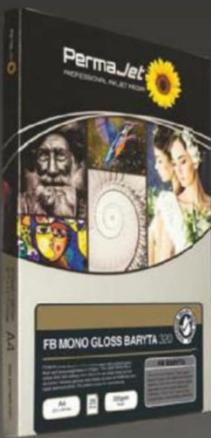
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Professor Newman on...

Depth from defocus

Bob Newman examines the technology behind Panasonic's alternative to a contrast-detect AF system

One of the more interesting bits of technology in modern cameras is Panasonic's Depth from Defocus algorithm. Most manufacturers, when faced with the task of building a rapid and positive autofocus system into a digital camera, have followed practice from SLRs and built a phase-detect system onto the sensor by modification of the sensor microlenses. This is the practice followed by Nikon, Olympus, Sony and Canon in various different ways. Panasonic, however, has produced a different solution with Depth from Defocus.

Contrast vs phase

First, let's discuss why an alternative to contrast-detect AF, as used on compacts and most mirrorless cameras, is required. Contrast detect works on the principle that an in-focus image will have higher contrast than an out-of-focus one. The focusing operation consists of repeatedly evaluating the contrasts of images and continuing to move the focus, as long as the contrast from one image to the next increases. When it starts to decrease, the focusing has gone too far and needs to be reversed to the peak point just passed. It is this characteristic that makes contrast-detect focusing prone to hunting. Phase-detect AF, by contrast, produces a direct measure of the extent and direction of out-of-focus. While not as accurate as contrast detect, which must always find the exact point of focus, it requires one reading to be taken to determine the required focus action rather than many, so can operate faster and more decisively.

Panasonic's Depth from Defocus uses the contrast-detect hardware in a creative and original manner to



Many Panasonic cameras, such as the Lumix GX80, have depth-from-defocus technology

The depth-from-defocus system takes two sample images at two different focus positions'

achieve nearly the same result as phase detect. I have just seen some Panasonic publicity material on the working of the system. While it doesn't give the whole game away, I can have an informed guess about how the system works. The key information is that the system takes two different sample images at two different focus positions. It then analyses them to discover the relative defocus of the different objects in the scene and calculates the required focus action to render them sharp.

I would hazard a guess that to do this it uses a process called

deconvolution. Convolution is a mathematical combination of two different functions. An out-of-focus image can be regarded as the convolution of a sharp image with the characteristic blur circle of defocus. Deconvolution reverses the process. Deconvolve the blur circle with the out-of-focus image and you end up with the sharp image. This is how focus-restoration programs work, the frailty being that unless you know exactly what is the blur circle, you end up with nasty artifacts all over the refocused image. If you deconvolve two out-of-focus images with different blur circles, you end up with a function expressing the difference of the blur circles. If you know the characteristic blur circle for the lens, you can use that to discover the extent of defocus – which is why Depth from Defocus only works with Panasonic lenses for which blur circle data is available.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

Contact

Amateur Photographer, Time Inc (UK) Ltd, Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7BF
Telephone 01252 555 213
Email amateurphotographer@timeinc.com
Picture returns: telephone 01252 555 378
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Printed in the UK by the Wyndham Group

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, London E14. Telephone 0203 787 9001

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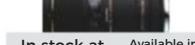
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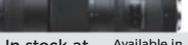
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14-42mm F3.5-5.6 Asph OIS.....	E++ £79
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MT-24EX Macro Ringlite..... E+ £49

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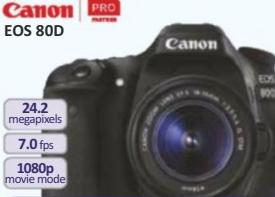


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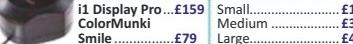
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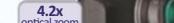
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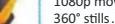
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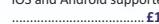
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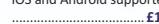
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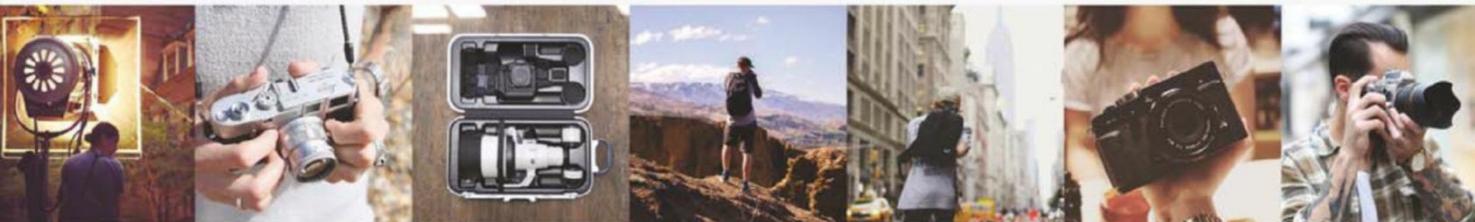


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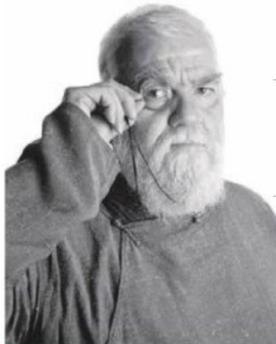
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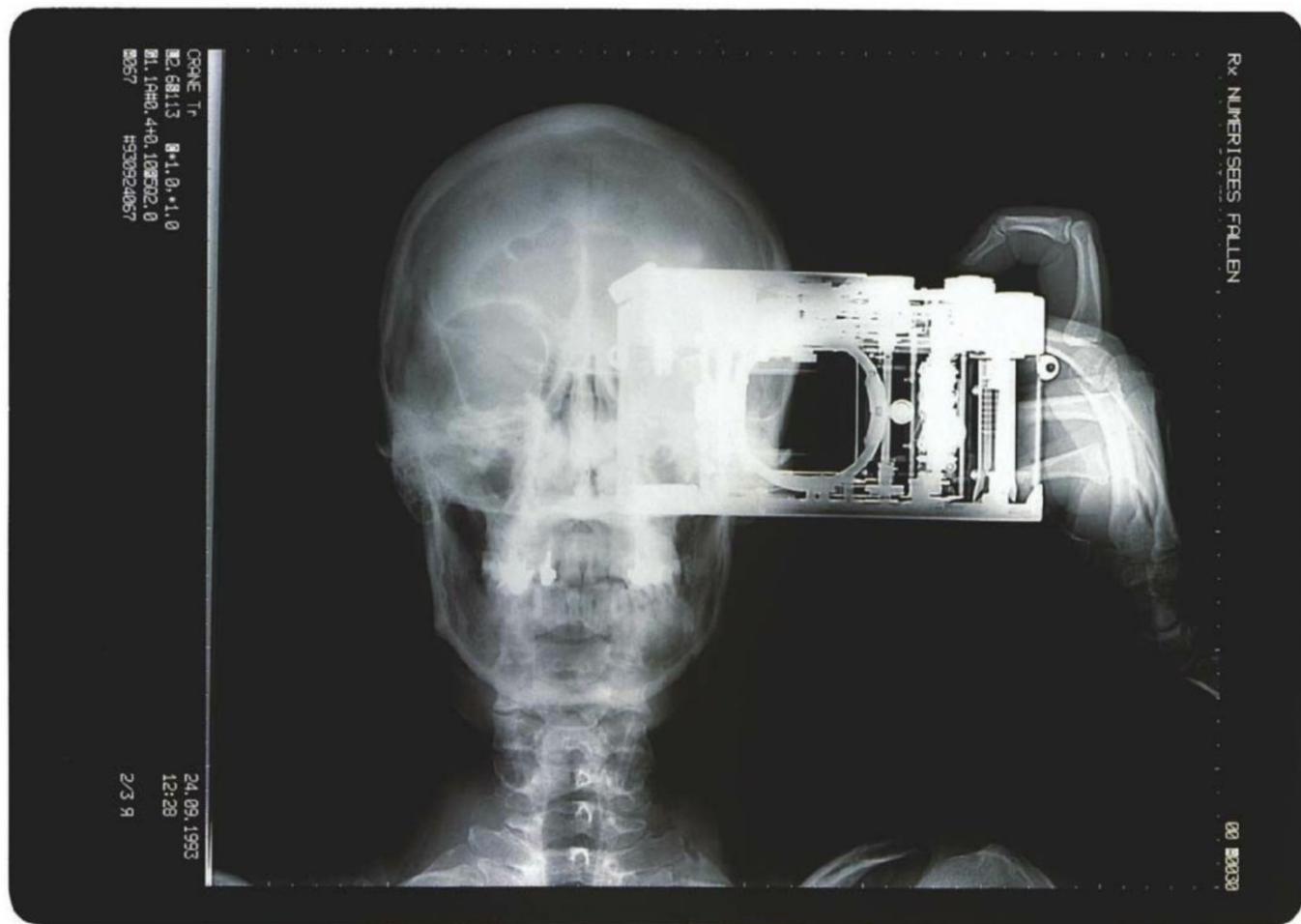


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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers... 'X-Ray Self-Portrait with Leica', 1993, by Christian Ramade



© CHRISTIAN RAMADE

What makes a really good photographer? I'd suggest there are two stages. First, we see one of their pictures and think, 'Wow, I want to see more of their work.' Second, we do see more of it and think 'wow' all over again. They're not as good as we thought they were. They are better.

This is what happened here. We saw Christian Ramade's photographs at Le Creative Image Lab (www.creativeimage-lab.com) at Arles. In my experience, this picture is unique – an X-ray self-portrait. It is from the series *Faux-semblants* (see more at www.christian-ramade.com), perhaps best translated as 'things are not what they seem'. Although it is the only X-ray in the series, it is utterly of a piece

with the rest of his work: brilliant, original and not always easy to accomplish. The unifying theme is the relationship between truth and photography; in this case, literally a many-layered truth. The X-ray was taken at the moment he pressed the shutter, the decisive moment. The film was fogged by the X-ray machine.

Audacious approach

Another series, now a book, was on the Hôtel Nord Pinus in Arles where Frances and I stayed just after we were married in 1982. Despite his protestations that he doesn't do portraits, it contains stunning portraits of its owner for many decades, Germaine Gilbert, who sang with Piaf. The hotel closed for extensive renovations just after we stayed there. We could never

afford to stay there again. Museums, hotels, street, X-ray: he is a versatile man.

In a sense, to be sure, all photography is no more than a question of standing in the right place and pressing the shutter release at the right time. Sometimes, though, you need more planning than usual to be standing in the right place at the right time. Ramade mentioned he sought the help of a friend who is an X-ray technician. We all have friends whose aid we could enlist. But such a friend, and to engage his assistance so audaciously? And such a skilled friend, who understands the concept? There is almost nothing one can say about the concept; but (as with the vast majority of his work) the audacity and excellence of the execution is equal to the audacity and excellence of the concept.

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his new website at www.rogerandfrances.eu). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. **Next week he considers an image by Zou.**



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